



Energy Awareness Expo

gives customers a chance to connect



The 10th annual Energy Awareness Expo at the Salvation Army in Duluth was another success with more than 1,500 attendees coming together to share in fellowship with community members, enjoy a hot meal, receive energy-efficient products and learn ways to save energy in the winter months ahead. Over 700 energy kits containing energy-saving products and related information were distributed to invitees.

The event, coordinated by Minnesota Power's Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) team and sponsored by the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, Minnesota Power, and ComfortSystems has become a staple for low-income and fixed-income individuals to sign up for energy assistance and weatherization, and speak with community organizations.

The Expo was the perfect opportunity to reach out to customers about signing up for the Customer Affordability of Residential Electricity (CARE) program which offers income-eligible customers a discount on their monthly electric bills. Customer Call Center representatives were on hand in the Minnesota Power booth and designated CARE room to answer questions and guide customers through the process of signing up for the rate.

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Katie Gascoigne
CIP Intern, Minnesota Power



“The Energy Expo is a great venue for Customer Service to meet face-to-face with some of our Duluth area customers,” said Luann LaValley, director of Customer Service. “I was impressed with the information shared with customers by our volunteer Customer Service staff from the call center and our CIP team on ways customers can save energy and how they can sign up for our CARE rate.”

Shelley Hakala Herman, MP Customer Call Center office supervisor, was one of the CARE rate experts on hand and gave this perspective on her first Expo. “Communicating directly with our customers was such a rewarding experience. It’s such a pleasure to talk to our customers about the programs we offer and the many ways we can help them save money. They appreciate that we have the information, tools, and resources at the Expo so they can start realizing the savings right away.”

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Director—Customer Service, Minnesota Power



Introducing the Conservation Challenge

The CIP team added another aspect to the energy-education portion of this event with a Conservation Challenge quiz. Attendees were given a five-question quiz on energy-efficient lighting with a guide to find the answers and an opportunity to win a “Save Energy” t-shirt if they received a perfect score on the quiz.

“Introducing the Conservation Challenge at this year’s Energy Awareness Expo was a great success. Attendees were very interested in learning about energy-efficient lighting and finding ways to incorporate energy efficiency in their own lives. It brought a fun element of education to the Expo,” said Katie Gascoigne, CIP intern.

While the core purpose of this event is educating customers about energy efficiency, energy assistance options and distributing energy-efficient products, the heart of the event is empowering and connecting with customers.

“This is my favorite event of the year,” said Amanda Oja, CIP energy efficiency analyst. “I continue to hear from attendees how important this event is for them. Connecting with customers one-on-one and knowing how much the information they receive helps them to get through the winter months makes the Expo a very meaningful experience.”



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