



Minnesota Power 30 WEST SUPERIOR STREET DULUTH, MINNESOTA 55802 www.mnpower.com Marilyn Weber, Editor Jan/Feb 2005



The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has released a preliminary plan for reducing mercury in the state's lakes and rivers. More than 1,200 watersheds are listed as "impaired waters" because fish in them have too much mercury in their tissues. The state Health Dept. issues advisories on eating fish with too much mercury. Minnesota is among dozens of states that are challenged to establish a plan to bring their impaired waters within standards, eliminating fish advisories, even though in-state emissions make only a small contribution to the problem.

Mercury can travel long distances through the atmosphere and fall to earth with rain and snow. About a third of the mercury deposited from the air in Minnesota is from natural

State mercury emissions dropped about 70 percent since 1990

sources such as volcanoes, soil and ocean releases and forest fires. The remainder is from human activities such as incineration of solid waste, industrial emissions and coal-fired electric generation. Interestingly, 90 percent of human-caused mercury deposition in Minnesota comes from sources outside the state. Because so many mercury sources are outside Minnesota's control, the large majority of reductions will have to come at the federal and international level.

Minnesota Power's coal-fired power plants are equipped with pollution control devices called wet scrubbers. "The technology for removing mercury at plants already operating with wet scrubbers is not commercially available," says Mike Cashin, one of MP's environmental specialists. "Eliminating emissions from Minnesota utilities might only be expected to reduce Minnesota mercury deposition about 2 or 3 percent." Cashin also notes that Asia — particularly China, whose economy is booming

— is a larger source of Minnesota mercury deposition than local, Minnesota emissions.

MP is the only electric utility in the state to achieve significant mercury reductions at our power plants (from 15 to 20 percent) between 1990 and 2000 — a fact recognized by the MPCA. We've long worked to study and reduce air emissions, including mercury, and invested in technology research. We've also conducted some of the nation's first full-scale testing of several innovative mercury reduction methods on plant stacks. The MPCA estimates mercury releases in the state dropped about 68 percent between 1990 and 2000 and a legislative goal of 70 percent will be reached this year.

The state intends to hold public hearings later this year on its mercury reduction plan. For more information about MP's mercury reduction efforts, contact Mike Cashin, 1-800-228-4966, ext. 3339.

Most power line right-of-way is privately owned land

Minnesota Power maintains about 7,500 miles of power line right-of-way throughout northern and central Minnesota. And most of it is owned by private parties. MP has been granted rights permitting the electric line to be constructed and maintained on the private land.

Because of this, rights-of-way are not public thoroughfares. If you make use of right-of-way for recreational

purposes such as snowmobiling, hunting, all terrain vehicle riding or other purposes, you must first obtain the land-owner's permission. Failure to get permission from the landowner can be considered trespassing.



We thought you'd like to know

Giving back to communities we serve with electric energy is a responsibility we take seriously. Minnesota Power's community and economic development efforts include contributions to nonprofit organizations of almost \$1 million annually and, helping business and industry expand in our region to sustain and create stable, good paying jobs.

MP was recently honored with a Corporate Citizen Award

Receive assistance from Minnesota Power

To apply for a contribution from Minnesota Power for a non profit organization or project in our services area, or to learn more about our economic development programs, visit our Web site: www.mnpower.com. (Click on Community Involvement or Economic Development.)

You're invited!

15th Annual Energy Design Conference and Expo

March 15 & 16 - Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center

Interested in learning about the latest innovations in energy technologies, efficient building concepts or sustainable development? This conference is for you.

Homeowners, builders, contractors, Realtors, architects, engineers, utility reps and others will benefit from this two-day Expo featuring over 55 workshops or seminars and product/service exhibits. Qualifying continuing education credits are available for builders and Realtors.

Call or register online: www.duluthenergydesign.com (view detailed agenda and fees) 1-800-228-4966, ext. 2796.

Sponsored by: Minnesota Power, CSI (Construction Specification Institute), Comfort Systems, Great River Energy, Arrowhead Builders Assoc., City of Duluth and SWL&P.

Do you generate your own electricity?

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) requires Minnesota Power to buy all electric energy that qualified facilities offer for sale. The rules apply to small power producers who use renewable resources and cogenerators who produce electricity and steam. Disputes that might arise over interconnections, sales or purchases of power will be resolved by the MPUC. You can obtain more information by contacting Minnesota Power.

from the City of Duluth for a corporate contribution of \$20,000 to The Salvation Army's HeatShare program. Funds are collected from utilities and customers to help needy individuals pay heating bills or heat-related repairs. MP customers also contributed another \$25,000 this past year to HeatShare.



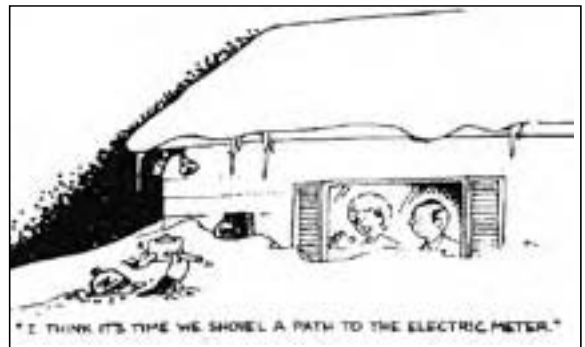
We'd like to send you a copy of our 2004 Community Investment Report that highlights many of our corporate contributions and our work with area businesses and the initiatives that serve them. Call 1-800-228-4966, press "o" for operator, and ask for MP's Community Investment Report.

Snow can hamper meter readers


Deep snow can sometimes make it impossible for meter readers to get to meters.

If this happens, customers may have their electric bill estimated for a month.

If at all possible, please give the meter reader a hand by clearing a path to your meter. Your help is greatly appreciated.



MINNESOTA POWER HAS WATERFRONT LOTS AVAILABLE FOR LEASE ON SCENIC WHITewater LAKE RESERVOIR NEAR GIANTS RIDGE GOLF & SKI RESORT IN NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA. The City of Hoyt Lakes provides water, sewer and a maintained access drive, making these lots absolutely one-of-a-kind. And the lots are woven into the city's park system of paved walking/biking trails—just out your door. Also for sale: prime hunting acreage in Minnesota's Arrowhead region. Contact us for more information.



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