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MEDIA ADVISORY

Minnesota Power Announces New Solar Energy Incentives

DULUTH, MN—People considering solar energy as a choice for their homes or businesses will welcome an enhanced program being launched by Minnesota Power in conjunction with the 22nd Annual Energy Design Conference & Expo, Feb. 21-22, 2012, at the Duluth Entertainment & Convention Center (DECC).

Minnesota Power's newly updated **SolarSense** program makes solar energy more affordable to residential and commercial customers, while promoting Minnesota manufacturers, ensuring quality installations, and recognizing customers who are committed to energy efficiency. Program rebates and incentives:

- Provide a base rebate of \$2,000 per kilowatt;
- Reward customers who choose solar products, equipment or systems manufactured in Minnesota;
- Encourage quality installation by solar installers certified through the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP);
- Offer a bonus rebate to customers with a proven history of energy efficiency in their homes or businesses; and
- Recognize nonprofit/tax exempt customers with a higher rebate to support demonstration and/or community renewable energy projects.

The program's new tiered incentives, when combined with the base rebate, could total as much as \$4,750 per kilowatt for eligible solar projects. For example, a 5 kW system could qualify for more than \$20,000 in combined rebates and incentives.

"Minnesota Power has a long-standing history of encouraging the adoption of renewable energy options such as solar electric systems," said Tina Koecher, manager of energy efficiency, Minnesota Power. "Solar is definitely part of the emerging energy landscape. Through our Power of One® conservation program rebates and tools, we can help our customers get the most for their energy dollars while realizing the many benefits of their investment in solar energy."

Minnesota Power hosts the annual Energy Design Conference & Expo at the DECC in partnership with many other organizations. To learn more about the enhanced SolarSense program, stop by the Minnesota Power exhibit booth, visit www.mnpower.com/powerofone under Renewable Energy, or call 218.355.2843, option 4.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 144,000 customers, 16 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at www.mnpower.com.

The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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