

one

community



SAVE ENERGY. SHARE WARMTH. "Great Refrigerator/Freezer Roundup"

April 2009

Partnership Spurs Community to Save Energy and Benefit HeatShare

Minnesota Power's "Great Refrigerator/Freezer Roundup" is not just rounding up energy hogs. Through a community partnership between Minnesota Power, the Salvation Army and St. Louis County, it has rustled up thousands of dollars to provide heating assistance for low income households in the Northland.

The "Great Refrigerator/Freezer Roundup" offers a \$50 reward to Minnesota Power customers turning in an old, inefficient refrigerator or freezer for recycling. The utility launched the innovative, two-year conservation program in January 2009 with a special promotion. Appliances collected in January and February resulted in \$25 donations to the Salvation Army's *HeatShare* program, helping low income families pay their utility bills through the long, cold winter. St. Louis County endorsed the program and promoted it to employees and residents.

This community partnership spurred tremendous response. Northern Minnesota residents turned in more than 400 refrigerators and freezers during the initial two-month period, effectively achieving the \$10,000 donation goal for *HeatShare*, while saving energy and benefiting the environment. The potential energy savings equate to avoiding 310 tons of carbon emission, which is like taking 62 cars off the road or powering 29 average homes for a year.

"It's a triple win," said St. Louis County Commissioner Steve O'Neil, who joined other St. Louis County Commissioners in unanimously approving support for this partnership.

"Participants earn money, save energy and lower carbon emissions by getting rid of old energy hogs; hundreds of appliances are recycled instead of sent to the county landfills or left in ditches; and low income families get needed assistance to heat their homes."

This has been a particularly challenging year for *HeatShare*, according to Major Alan Fones of Salvation Army Duluth. From October to March, the program spent \$28,000 to help 95 households pay heating bills, and families were continuing to apply at a growing pace and needing greater amounts. During the first two weeks of March alone, 18 families received more than \$16,000 in heating assistance.

"*HeatShare* is invaluable to our clients," Major Fones said. "One of the nicest things about these funds is that 100 percent stays in our area, helping people keep their power on—that's remarkable."

"Each person who accepted the challenge to save energy and benefit *HeatShare* by rounding up their old refrigerators and freezers made a real difference in our community," said Al Lian, marketing analyst, Minnesota Power. "This event is a wonderful example of how the combined efforts of Minnesota Power, its customers and other community stakeholders can accomplish great things—a true demonstration of the Power of One® and a testament to the commitment of both St. Louis County and the Salvation Army to the well-being of their communities."

"Minnesota Power has a longstanding relationship with the Salvation Army," said Sue Thompson, director of customer relations, Minnesota Power. She noted that Minnesota Power Foundation donated \$30,000 to *HeatShare* in 2008 and utility customers gave an additional \$25,000 to the program by 'rounding up' their electric bills on a monthly basis. In addition, Minnesota Power has sponsored "Save Energy and Share Warmth" energy-efficient lighting sales to raise money for *HeatShare*.

St. Louis County and Minnesota Power also partner in numerous ways. They are working together on a countywide plan to end homelessness and cooperating to help the county achieve its environmental goals through a variety of energy conservation improvement projects.

Every individual, business and organization has the ability to impact their community and their environment in positive ways through the energy choices they make. One change, one choice is all it takes. Minnesota Power has the tools to help.

That's the **Power of One**® ... *it begins with you.*



Top: More than 400 old refrigerators and freezers were rounded up, raising \$10,000 for *HeatShare*. Bottom: Major Alan Fones, Salvation Army Duluth; Sue Thompson, Minnesota Power; Steve O'Neil, St. Louis County

Every community has the power to save energy, lower costs and benefit the environment through conservation. Minnesota Power offers resources and programs that help schools, cities, neighborhoods and organizations work as communities to make a difference through energy efficiency.

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