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Xcel Energy renews commitment to energy efficiency, conservation initiatives

MINNEAPOLIS – Joining with utilities, regulators and energy users throughout the nation, Xcel Energy today renewed its commitment to energy efficiency and pledged to continue pursuing initiatives to encourage customers to conserve electricity and natural gas.

“Xcel Energy, a national leader in energy efficiency and load-management efforts, spent nearly \$85 million on energy-saving projects for residential and business customers in its 10-state service territory in 2005,” said Paul Bonavia, president of Xcel Energy’s utilities group.

Those projects helped save enough energy to satisfy the electricity needs of 31,500 homes and the natural gas needs of 11,400 homes for one year, he said. Since 1992, Xcel Energy customers have saved enough electricity to help the company avoid building eight 250-megawatt power plants, he added.

“Energy efficiency and load management programs help us avoid building expensive facilities for peak-use periods, help reduce customer bills and help preserve the environment,” Bonavia said.

Bonavia commented as a National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency was released today at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners’ summer meeting in San Francisco. The plan was developed by a group that includes 23 electricity and natural gas utilities – including Xcel Energy – seven state utility regulators and more than 30 other organizations. The U.S. Department of Energy and federal Environmental Protection Agency facilitated the group’s effort.

Deb Sundin, director of business product marketing at Xcel Energy and the company’s representative on the national Action Plan leadership group, said the plan is a good resource for states and utilities new to the world of energy efficiency and for other states and utilities interested in refining and enhancing their energy efficiency and load management efforts.

“This plan provides ‘best practice’ information and options for states and utilities to consider when developing regulatory policies that encourage the use of energy efficiency as a priority resource,” Sundin said.

Xcel Energy’s conservation efforts are increasing on a number of fronts, Sundin added. For example, she said:

- In Minnesota, Xcel Energy’s commitment to energy conservation will increase 18 percent -- from 221 gigawatt hours to 262 gigawatt hours on average annually -- under the company’s Resource Plan that is pending before the state’s Public Utilities Commission.
- In Colorado, Xcel Energy will reduce demand by 320 megawatts from now through 2013; this represents a 60 percent increase in commitment. The company also has committed to an energy reduction of 800 gigawatt hours during the same period, a new goal.
- In New Mexico, conservation efforts will increase under legislative initiatives taking effect there.

For more information on the National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/eeactionplan.htm>

Xcel Energy is a major U.S. electricity and natural gas company with regulated operations in 10 Western and Midwestern states. Xcel Energy provides a comprehensive portfolio of energy-related products and services to 3.3 million electricity customers and 1.8 million natural gas customers through its regulated operating companies. Company headquarters are located in Minneapolis. More information is available at www.xcelenergy.com.

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