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Contact: Tim Frisbie, 312-251-9913
tfrisbie@ksapr.com

Innovative Industrial Energy Efficiency Program Wins MEEA Inspiring Efficiency Marketing Award

Chicago – Xcel Energy, a utility supplier of electricity and natural gas to eight Western and Midwestern states, has received the 2011 Inspiring Efficiency Marketing Award from Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA) for its groundbreaking Process Efficiency program.

Xcel started the Process Efficiency program to increase the participation of large industrial customers in energy efficiency efforts after it realized that its traditional programs had a narrow focus and did not appeal to larger customers.

The Process Efficiency program analyzes a customer's total energy use – everything from the equipment used in the manufacturing process to the building's HVAC and lighting systems. The study even evaluates a customer's business practices, such as determining how energy efficiency factors into the purchasing and procurement process.

Using the information from the research and mapping phase, Xcel then creates a three- to five-year custom implementation plan for the customer. The cost of the program is heavily subsidized by Xcel, and its recommendations often include many low-cost or no-cost opportunities to realize energy savings.

Since its launch in 2007, the program has generated more than 95 Gigawatt hours of electric savings and 150,000 Dekatherms of natural gas savings.

“The Process Efficiency program was originally developed with the intent that customers would complete their energy management plan and be on their way,” said Xcel Energy Product Manager Tami Gunderzik.

“Customer response to the tools and support has made terminating their participation in the program more difficult. They now view Xcel as a partner when it comes to managing their long-term energy use, and they don't want to end that relationship.”

Gunderzik accepted the award at MEEA's annual Midwest Energy Solutions Conference, www.meeaconference.org, on January 13 in Chicago.

“Xcel's Process Efficiency program has sparked real excitement about energy efficiency in the industrial community. Saving energy, lowering costs and improving the companies

bottomline,” said MEEA Acting Executive Director Jay Wrobel. “MEEA is proud to recognize Xcel’s efforts with our Inspiring Efficiency Marketing Award.”

MEEA’s Marketing Award is presented annually to an organization that has engaged in or supported a marketing campaign, program, strategy, or idea to increase the adoption of energy efficient products or best practices in the Midwest.

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Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, www.mwalliance.org, is a collaborative network advancing energy efficiency in the Midwest to support sustainable economic development and environmental preservation.

MEEA promotes the market transformation of energy efficiency technologies, processes and best practices within a 13-state area, through policy advocacy, program design and facilitation and piloting of energy technologies. MEEA bridges the gap between policy adoption and program implementation.