



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 13, 2012

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Midwest Energy Efficiency Leaders Recognized for Groundbreaking Achievements
2012 Inspiring Efficiency Award Winners Celebrated

CHICAGO – The eight winners of the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance’s (MEEA) *2012 Inspiring Efficiency Awards* are industry leaders who have delivered innovative advancements in energy efficiency saving consumers and businesses money. Projects range from Minnesota’s Energy Innovation Corridor – a clean energy and transportation proving ground located along an 11-mile route between St. Paul and Minneapolis – to an Interactive Learning Lab in Davenport, Iowa that uses fun, hands-on displays to engage students and adults to promote smart energy use.

“The 2012 Inspiring Efficiency award winners demonstrate the strong commitment to energy efficiency in the Midwest,” said Jay Wrobel, MEEA Executive Director. “These winners developed innovative and creative programs to save consumers money, reduce energy usage and help businesses be more competitive.”

This year’s winners were honored at the *Inspiring Efficiency Awards Dinner and Gala* on Thursday, Jan. 12, during MEEA’s 10th annual *Midwest Energy Solutions Conference* (www.meeaconference.org). The three-day conference, which runs through today at the Fairmont Hotel in Chicago, is the largest of its kind in the Midwest. The event brings together a broad range of private- and public-sector thought leaders in energy strategy, policy, technology and program design and implementation.

The *Inspiring Efficiency Awards* competition recognizes Midwest energy efficiency leaders in five categories: Leadership, Education, Impact, Innovation and Marketing. The *Inspiring Efficiency Chairman’s Award* is also bestowed each year to an individual or organization that has exhibited exemplary leadership for energy efficiency in the Midwest and support of MEEA.

Award recipients for 2012 included:

- **Chairman’s Award: Commonwealth Edison (ComEd)**, for its dedication to energy efficiency and its long-running support of MEEA and the Midwest Energy Solutions Conference. ComEd is a founding member of MEEA and served in a leading role on its board of directors from 2000 through 2010.
- **Leadership Award:** Iowa Office of Consumer Advocate Attorney **Jennifer Easler**, for spearheading a collaborative effort with Iowa utilities to advance energy efficiency initiatives.
- **Education Award:** The Eastern Iowa Community Colleges **Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center** (ATEEC) in Davenport, Iowa, for its new Interactive Learning Lab that teaches students and other visitors about sustainable and renewable energy technologies.
- **Impact Award:** The **Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives**, for its highly successful HomE (pronounced “Home E”) program, which helped 25 distribution cooperatives in Illinois

perform nearly 3,500 home energy audits and drive more than \$25 million in energy efficiency investments over just 15 months.

- **Innovation Awards:**
 - The **Ohio Hospital Association**, for the successful program led by its Energy Team to help Ohio hospitals reduce energy use and utility bills.
 - The **Energy Innovation Corridor**, a clean energy and transportation initiative located along an 11-mile route between St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn. The project is driven by Xcel Energy and a collaborative of 20 other businesses, nonprofits and government agencies.
- **Marketing Awards:**
 - **AEP Ohio**, for its successful campaign encouraging commercial customers to change out inefficient T12 fluorescent lights in favor of more energy efficient bulbs. The effort reached more than 100,000 commercial customers.
 - **DTE Energy**, which teamed up with the Detroit Red Wings on a campaign to promote energy efficiency and reach new customers. The effort combined elements of event marketing with social media promotion and helped the utility grow its social media presence from 250 fans to more than 7,500 in just two weeks.

More information about the *Inspiring Efficiency Awards* and this year's recipients can be found at www.meeaconference.org.

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Editor's Note: If you'd like more information about any of the panel discussions or would like to arrange interviews with conference presenters or MEEA representatives, contact Tim Frisbie at tfrisbie@ksapr.com or 312-251-9913.

About Midwest Energy Solutions Conference

The Midwest Energy Solutions Conference is the largest event of its kind in the region. Each year it brings together a broad range of private- and public-sector thought leaders from around the nation who share a vested interest in energy efficiency.

The conference is presented by the **Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)**, the region's source on energy efficiency. Formed in 2000, MEEA is committed to advancing sound energy efficiency programs, policies and priorities in the Midwest. MEEA's membership represents a broad consortium of energy stakeholders from across a 13-state area.

Now in its 10th year, the conference continues to grow as energy efficiency investment increases in states across the Midwest. Responding to attendees, the conference has expanded to include a formal expo to provide more opportunities to highlight and promote energy efficiency programs, products and companies.