

ENERGYMATTERS

CLEAN CARS FOR MINNESOTA



This fall, hundreds of community members in Mankato gathered for the second annual “Recharge Mankato” event. Sponsored by the Olseth Family Foundation, Mankato Area Foundation, South Central College, and Minnesota State University, Mankato, the event featured opportunities to ride or drive new electric car models and celebrated the first of what will be a series of new fast charging stations in the Mankato area.

“The chief engineer of the all-electric Chevy Bolt is a graduate of Minnesota State University, Mankato, and has now been assigned to develop GM’s upcoming electric pickup truck,” says Jon Olseth, a teacher of English literature at Riverland Community College and director of the Olseth Family Foundation. “Electric vehicles, like our communities, are evolving—and if we don’t, we’ll get left behind.”

Mankato leaders see electric vehicles as key to keeping innovation in the community. They are also a crucial building block in meeting the challenge of global climate change.

Transportation is now the leading source of climate pollution, both here in Minnesota as well as nationally. While we continue to make progress in the electricity sector, our inability to reduce climate pollution throughout the rest of Minnesota’s economy has caused us to fall well short of meeting our state’s greenhouse gas reduction goals. Finally, there’s progress.

Just four days after Mankato’s successful event, Governor Tim Walz and other state leaders gathered at

Kaposia Park in South Saint Paul to announce “Clean Cars Minnesota”—a new initiative to adopt clean car standards here in Minnesota. Governor Walz’s announcement makes Minnesota the first state in the Midwest to adopt clean car standards, and puts our state in a position to lead the way for our neighbors to follow. Minnesota’s bold move has made national headlines.

But most importantly, Clean Cars Minnesota is going to mean cleaner air for Minnesota communities and better vehicle choices for Minnesota consumers. In fact, the widely respected and independent publication Consumer Reports called Governor Walz’s proposal “a win for all Minnesota families.” That’s big praise for Minnesota’s governor, and entirely deserved. Popular new electric car models like the Hyundai Kona are outselling supply so much so that manufacturers have only made them available in states with clean car standards—with Clean Cars Minnesota, consumers in Minnesota will soon have many more clean electric options to choose from.

Fresh Energy has been at the forefront of advocating for clean car standards in Minnesota for more than a decade. Now that the Walz administration is moving forward with Clean Cars Minnesota, Fresh Energy’s team of experts will be working hard to provide the sound science and data-driven analysis that state leaders will need as they begin rulemaking to implement Minnesota’s first clean car standards.

Stay up to date on opportunities to engage at
fresh-energy.org/take-action



Photo by Anna Min

Fresh Energy's 2019 Benefit Breakfast was our biggest yet, and most inspiring. Speakers Rhiana Gunn-Wright and Jigar Shah lifted up the early morning crowd (see the details at fresh-energy.org/benefitbreakfast). They brought a compelling and aligned vision of how policy change and business can drive down carbon emissions at the speed and scale of the problem, while growing healthy, equitable communities and successful companies.

We don't have the luxury for slow, incremental change. We need change consistent with the plain physics of the problem. That means deep and fast cuts in carbon pollution, not just in our electric system, but in transportation, buildings, agriculture, and industry.

By ramping up efficiency, creating a carbon-free electricity supply, and electrifying much more of our economy, we can get on track to meet the goal of net zero by midcentury.

Making the point dramatically, Fresh Energy highlighted our children protesting around the world. They appeared in our event video and on the Benefit Breakfast podium with one clear message: Join us, we can do this.

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LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE AND OTHER STORIES
AT [FRESH-ENERGY.ORG](https://fresh-energy.org)

NEW RENTAL-FOCUSED RESOURCE



Rental property is an important asset, for owners and for the people who call it home. The Saint Paul Property Dweller-Property Owner Energy Information, Education and Resource Guide (ENERG) aims to be a hub of information, providing education and resources for how everyone can play a role in improving the energy efficiency of rental homes.

Born of a Fresh Energy and Community Stabilization Project (CSP) partnership, the ENER G guide is rooted in a collaborative vision of energy and housing justice, and how it can be achieved in response to climate change and the affordable housing crisis by engaging property dwellers and property owners on energy efficiency programs and improved housing.

POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY SOLAR IS SWEEPING THE NATION (AND WINNING AWARDS)



Fresh Energy has helped Minnesota become a leader in planting flowering meadows under and around utility-scale solar farms. Through our Center for Pollinators in Energy, we are catalyzing other projects—from Twin Falls, Idaho, to Burlington, Vermont, and Salt Lake City to Washington, D.C.

Partners including Clif Bar and the Clif Family Winery, ULTA, IT Cosmetics, LUSH, General Mills, Cascadian Farm, University of Minnesota, Forever Green, Pheasants Forever, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory are jumping on board and Fresh Energy's work advancing pollinator-friendly solar was awarded the prize for "Best Public Affairs Campaign" at Solar Power International.

ENERGY NEWS NETWORK REACH EXPANDING



Energy News Network stories have been moving on the Associated Press wire for more than a year, thanks to a partnership facilitated by the Institute for Nonprofit News. That partnership has been recently expanded to include Illinois, with an August feature by Kari Lydersen on a Black-owned company working to expand clean energy to affordable housing being republished by nine news outlets around the state (pictured above). The Network is also partnering with the Ohio Center for Investigative Journalism on a series exploring how the state's utilities have come to have such heavy influence over legislative and regulatory oversight. For the latest information, or to sign up for a daily digest email, visit energynews.us.

XCEL INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN A KEY OPPORTUNITY TO REDUCE CARBON, ADDRESS EQUITY



Xcel Energy, Minnesota's largest utility, is in the midst of an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) process with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, heading toward a key decision point that will determine how Xcel will invest in generating electricity over the next 15 years.

The draft plan, filed on July 1, includes Xcel's commitment to an 80% carbon reduction by 2030 and a 100% carbon-free electric system by 2050. The proposal details a future with no coal after

2030, historic levels of energy efficiency, and a dramatic increase in renewable electricity with a tripling of solar energy over the next 10 years.

Fresh Energy is pleased that the plan points Minnesota toward a carbon-free future with zero coal. Nonetheless, there is still room to go further, faster. Our regulatory staff is digging into the details, using leading-edge modeling software and a team of expert consultants to answer key questions and generate data-driven alternative approaches. Specifically, we will focus on:

GAS PLANT INFRASTRUCTURE The plan includes a new gas plant in Becker, Minnesota, that made it through the legislature in 2017. But much has changed since then. Is a new gas plant the best approach given costs and energy needs? We don't think so and will be proposing alternative, non-fossil fuel options.

EQUITY The plan doesn't explicitly address energy access and equity. What opportunities are there to ensure no one is left behind in the transition to clean energy?

A COST-EFFECTIVE PATH TO 100% How can the plan best project future energy demand and subsequent investment in new infrastructure that includes modern solutions, like energy storage technologies and flexible electricity use to enable more renewables? Additionally, what is the role for Xcel's nuclear plants?

Xcel's proposed plan is the first step in what will be a long and detailed regulatory process. Our experts and partners will be working hard over the coming months to make sure the plan works for all Minnesotans. Visit fresh-energy.org/take-action for opportunities to weigh in.

You can take advantage of tax savings when you donate to Fresh Energy by December 31, 2019. Contact individual giving director Meggie LaValley at Lavalley@Fresh-Energy.org.



GIVING SMART

Mike Menzel, M.D., and Kathy Iverson have been Fresh Energy supporters and Power Circle donors since 2014, but they were passionate clean energy champions long before then. Both are medical professionals and have seen firsthand the public health benefits of moving away from dirty fossil fuels. That's why they helped found Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate, a nonprofit dedicated to addressing climate change through education, clinical practice, and public advocacy. So it was a natural fit when they discovered our work. "Fresh Energy is a solid performer in building Minnesota's energy transition to renewables," Mike said. "Their expertise has resulted in big policy success for all Minnesotans. Fresh Energy's work makes our climate healthier and keeps our energy costs affordable."

This year, Mike and Kathy decided to do something a little different when making their annual donation—they contributed a portion of their required minimum IRA distribution. "Since we turned 70 this year, we decided to use some of our required IRA distribution to support charities that make a difference, which was a win-win for everyone. It resulted in a tax benefit for us, while making an impact in our community right now." Thank you, Mike and Kathy, for your dedication to this cause and game-changing support!



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MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Big decisions are coming up
in the next few months, and
your involvement matters!



MINNESOTA HAS A LINCHPIN ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE

AT THE LEGISLATURE: Fresh Energy and its partners will be advocating for bold action, including work to pass laws reflecting Governor Walz's commitment to 100% clean energy by midcentury. We will keep you posted on opportunities to weigh in on individual policies and through our work as a proud member of the 100% Campaign.

AT THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION: Utilities make many decisions that shape our clean energy future, and Xcel Energy's Integrated Resource Plan process is one of the biggest. Individuals and organizations can provide comments on the plan. Fresh Energy can provide the facts to help you understand the issue and communicate your personal views.

IN YOUR HOME AND COMMUNITY: Find the fossil fuels in your life and switch to clean electricity—for your car, appliances, lawncare equipment, and home and water heating. Then tell your neighbors about it! Personal actions make a difference, especially when they plant the seeds for broader community action! Many cities are launching Climate Action Plans, another great way to make an impact.

Discover steps you can take, and time-sensitive
opportunities to make your voice heard!

FRESH-ENERGY.ORG/TAKE-ACTION