



Minneapolis - Saint Paul Solar in the Cities Initiative



Minneapolis and Saint Paul are pleased to be recognized as Solar America Cities. Through the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar America Cities partnership, 26 major U.S. cities are working to accelerate the adoption of solar energy technologies for a cleaner, more secure energy future. The Minneapolis Saint Paul *Solar in the Cities* Initiative has an aggressive goal of increasing solar capacity 500% in the Twin Cities during the two years covered by the grant period.

Five priority areas:

- City and state policies
- Financing mechanisms
- Integrating solar in city infrastructure
- Building public awareness
- Training and education

The Solar America Cities grant allows Minneapolis and Saint Paul to dedicate resources to identify strategies that will result in solar friendly policies, practices, and regulations. The grant includes technical expertise from the National Renewable Energy Lab in the areas of policy, technology, research, financing, and education.

Solar in the Cities Initiative includes partnerships with:

Minnesota Department of Commerce	District Energy St. Paul
Xcel Energy	Minnesota Renewable Energy Society
League of Minnesota Cities	Center for Energy and Environment
Fresh Energy	SolarFlow Energy
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	Neighborhood Energy Connection

Accomplishments to Date:

- Secured \$1 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Solar Market Transformation Grant which leverages and additional \$1.2 million from District Energy St. Paul.
- Secured \$2.8 million in additional Federal Stimulus funds plus approximately \$1 million in rebates and matching funds for solar installations along the Energy Innovation Corridor between downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis.
- Coordinated multi-stakeholder working group that resulted in passage of strong solar legislation in 2009 and advancing 2010 legislative initiatives.
- Installed two solar charging systems for plug-in hybrid cars that is part of HourCar, a local non-profit's car sharing program in order to showcase emerging opportunities.
- Commissioned Net Metering "White" Paper providing an overview national trends and best management opportunities for Minnesota.
- Sponsored solar trainings for regulators, local government officials and solar instructors.
- Creating a solar resource mapping process to proactively identify where solar energy opportunities can be incorporated into new development and redevelopment, such as along the Energy Innovation Corridor.
- Developed a real-time solar evaluation model to more accurately predict the value of solar energy for end-users and utilities.

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