



Contact: Annette Henkel, 651-227-7902  
[info@energyminnesota.org](mailto:info@energyminnesota.org)  
[www.EnergyMinnesota.org](http://www.EnergyMinnesota.org)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Minnesota investor-owned utilities build vital workforce

Minnesota investor-owned utilities make a significant impact on state and local economies with stable employment opportunities. Altogether, the investor-owned utilities provide 9,300 jobs in Minnesota, including more than 5,000 union jobs. In addition, they create almost 24,000 jobs indirectly through outside vendors. For over 145 years, these companies have created good-paying, reliable jobs to develop a quality workforce for Minnesota that is valued, rewarded, and respected.

To create a stable workforce for their companies and their communities, investor-owned utilities are committed to attracting, retaining, and engaging talented workers. Directed efforts to recruit quality candidates for the wide variety of jobs available in the energy industry help the companies continue to invest in a strong future. **Otter Tail Power Company** expects approximately 40 percent of its workforce to retire within the next ten years. With an average tenure of 32 years at retirement, their long-term employees take precious skills and expertise with them. To manage this organizational change, the company promotes internal succession planning, works with employees to increase efficiencies, and bolsters recruitment strategies at job fairs and educational institutions. **Xcel Energy** proactively finds qualified internal and external candidates for its open positions. In 2015 they posted 2,303 job requisitions, with 37 percent of internal candidates filing the openings. These utilities have established relationships with technical schools to ensure they offer the right kind of training and curriculum to prepare the future workforce for careers in energy. **CenterPoint Energy** knows they cannot replace their highly trained workforce easily. Company recruiters visit local technical schools, military recruiting events, post their open jobs on web career boards, such as, LinkedIn, construction job boards, diversity related job boards and local workforce commissions. They also made a [recruiting video](#) for those interested in the trades to learn about what is like to work for an utility where employees share CenterPoint Energy's core values of safety, integrity, accountability, initiative and respect for fellow employees, customers and the communities served by the company.

Veteran outreach programs are strong at the investor-owned utilities as a sign of their commitment to recruiting and supporting military service members. In 2016 the state of Minnesota proclaimed **Minnesota Power** a Yellow Ribbon Company, the first Duluth-based company to receive the program's declaration. The program supports service members,

veterans, and their families by providing pay differential, supporting military family members, and making a commitment to hiring veterans. In 2015 **Xcel Energy** created and implemented military-specific marketing and communications efforts, which increased their veteran hires by 10.7 percent, more than 3 percent over their 2014 rate. **CenterPoint Energy** has a comprehensive policy designed to support employees in the Reserves, in the National Guard, or on active duty that includes paid time off for required annual training, “make whole” pay, veteran reemployment, and continuation of health benefits.

To create an inclusive, diverse work environment for its employees, investor-owned utilities promote a culture where all people thrive. In 2012 women in executive and management positions at **Otter Tail Power Company** formed Otter Tail Women Networking and Integrating Talents (OWN IT). As part of the company’s talent development program, OWN IT invites other women in the company to discuss careers, leadership, and life with successful women from the industry and beyond. Likewise, **Minnesota Energy Resources** values diversity as an opportunity to strengthen its company’s success. Its commitment to ensuring a qualified and diverse organization reflects the company’s strong determination to become a high-performance, pluralistic organization that will achieve a sustained competitive advantage in a global energy marketplace. **CenterPoint Energy** values a passion and desire to learn and those enthusiastic about taking on fresh challenges on a daily basis. The company also has its own technical training department to build skills and promote safe work operations.

Minnesota’s investor-owned utilities realize that employees are their biggest asset. As these companies continue to work hard to meet Minnesota’s energy needs, they also continue to provide quality workers to maintain a stable labor force. Providing energy to more than 2.2 million residential customers and 736,500 business customers throughout Minnesota is a big job. The investor-owned utilities have the people to make it happen.

*Energy Minnesota is an initiative of Minnesota’s investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities. The privately run, investor-owned utilities in Minnesota deliver safe, reliable and affordable energy 24/7/365. This track record of performance has been ongoing for nearly a century and a half. Energy Minnesota strives to inform and educate customers, businesses, community leaders and public policymakers and to foster well-informed public policy. Learn more at [www.energyminnesota.org](http://www.energyminnesota.org).*

413 Wacouta Street #230 St. Paul, MN 55101 | [www.EnergyMinnesota.org](http://www.EnergyMinnesota.org) | [@EnergyMinnesota](https://twitter.com/EnergyMinnesota)