



Event Highlights

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Long-time Crookston Business saves thousands of dollars with energy efficiency and water-saving measures

Submitted by:

Linda Kingery, University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships & Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs), 218-281-8697 or kinge002@umn.edu

March 1, 2011, Crookston, MN – Twenty people gathered for a “Meet ‘n Greet” tour of Dahlgren & Company, Inc., hosted by the Northwest Clean Energy Resource Teams (NW CERT) on February 24th. This “Meet ‘n Greet” was the first in a series of site visits hosted by NW CERT, to highlight energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts underway around the Northwest region.

Dahlgren & Company, Inc. (Dahlgren's) has been a major manufacturer in Crookston since 1955. Dahlgren's has recently implemented many projects that have saved their company tens of thousands of dollars, through energy efficiency and water conservation improvements.

Meeting participants toured the facility to see exactly how this major manufacturer has made these improvements, and to learn how they can replicate this success in their own businesses.



“Folks were very engaged and interested in learning about Dahlgren's energy efficiency and water-saving improvements,” said Linda Kingery, CERTs Steering Committee member. “It was great to have the participation of students from the University of Minnesota – Crookston and for them to see a Crookston graduate, Travis Oliver, now working as a Sustainability Coordinator for Dahlgren's.”

During the tour, meeting participants learned some amazing facts about Dahlgren's energy savings, which they hope to replicate in their own small businesses.

Gordy Terpstra, Electrical Supervisor/Plant Services, shared that by retrofitting their lighting, adding occupancy sensors and other projects, Dahlgren's reduced its overall electrical use by 18% between 2009 and 2010, for a payback of 1.2 years.

In one warehouse, Dahlgren's reduced their electricity bill by 250% within one year. In 2009, the warehouse used 134,423 kilowatt hours (kWh), costing \$8150. After implementing energy efficiency measures, they reduced their use to 53,612 kWh in 2010, reducing the cost by 250% to \$3250. They accomplished this by switching out 33 fixtures, replacing metal halide lights with fluorescents, and adding occupancy sensors, as well as implementing other projects.

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Dahlgren's has started recycling water in their roasting facility, to save some of the 17 million gallons of water used throughout the plant annually. Now water is captured from the cooling scrubbers, filtered, and used again in their roasting scrubbers. From this simple change, they already have and will continue to save two million gallons of water per year, a 6.6% reduction. "This is just the tip of the iceberg. We think we can reduce our water use by 60%," said Terpstra.

Dahlgren's is also innovative in their approach to finding solutions. "Green Teams," comprised of employees who know the ins and outs of daily operations, have formed in four different areas of the plant. The Green Teams propose projects and improvements for the plant. This culture change has not only saved thousands of dollars for the company, but has also invigorated employee morale.

To see photos and to learn more about ways this and other businesses can save water, energy, and money, visit <http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/regions/northwest> (see "Meeting Notes, February 24, 2011").

The second NW CERT "Meet 'n Greet" in this series will take place 10 a.m. Thursday, March 24, 2010 at Bio Haus, located at Concordia Language Villages in Bemidji. Register online to attend this free event at: <http://nwmeetngreet2.eventbrite.com>.

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The **Clean Energy Resource Teams** (CERTs) connect Minnesotans and their communities with resources to identify and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The Clean Energy Resource Teams are diverse—individuals; small business owners; farmers; members of community groups; local utility representatives; educators; local, state, and federal government staff and elected leaders—and all share a common interest: They want strong communities, local jobs, and secure, clean, reliable energy.

CERTs is a partnership of the University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, Eureka Recycling, Southwest Regional Development Commission, The Minnesota Project, and the Minnesota Office of Energy Security. Learn more at www.mncerts.org.

www.CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org

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