



Structure Document

Metro Clean Energy Resource Team (CERT) Network

January 5, 2010

Background on CERTs

The Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) project has proven to be a successful model of encouraging community-level energy planning and project development in the rural regions of Minnesota. Six rural CERTs were organized through a partnership of the state, non-profits and the University of Minnesota. These CERTs have brought together diverse interests to develop regional energy plans and foster numerous energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. This success resulted in the 2007 Minnesota legislature officially adopting the goals and mission of the CERTs program in Minnesota Statutes; the legislation also called for the development of a Twin Cities Metro Clean Energy Resource Team. With half the state's population and a great deal of organizations already working on energy issues, coordinating a Metro Clean Energy Resource Team presents its own unique challenges.

The Metro CERT Network will provide a new resource to communities around the metro, but draws heavily on existing metro efforts and resource organizations to ensure that the CERT approach adds value to existing community-energy issues rather than competing with them. Metro CERT is in a unique position to do this because of its community-based, non-advocacy approach that allows for all community members to get involved at whatever level they deem appropriate, in an easy to enter/easy to exit network. As a collaborative entity, Metro CERT looks forward to partnering with metro-based organizations to further community-based projects and goals.

Clean energy efforts in the Twin Cities metro region

Efforts to save energy and generate renewable energy are motivated by a wide range of issues, including:

- Global warming
- Peak oil
- Energy independence
- Economic benefits of local generation of energy
- Saving money
- Price volatility of fossil fuels
- Health impacts of fossil-fuel emissions

While not everyone may agree on the reasons for clean energy, there is broad consensus that we must transition away from fossil fuel usage. CERTs is deliberately neutral about the rationale for transition, because it is not about advocacy and aims to bring the widest range of people into the effort.

Vision statement for Metro CERT Network

The programmatic mission of the statewide CERTs program is: *to connect people with the technical resources they need to identify and implement community-scale energy efficiency and clean energy projects.* Within this mission, the Metro CERT Network's four main goals, also consistent with those of the statewide CERTs are to: (1) Create a network to support and encourage collaboration among Twin Cities community-based energy projects and planning efforts; (2) Provide organizing support to help local efforts get off the ground; (3) Connect local efforts with technical resources; (4) Help the State of Minnesota achieve its energy efficiency and renewable energy goals.

Features of the Metro CERT Network:

- Metro CERT is organized as a network: thus we refer to it as the Metro CERT Network.
- The Metro CERT Network will work to enhance and support community-level energy planning and project development in the Twin Cities for existing groups working on community projects and new efforts to organize local communities that want to form their own CERT affiliate.
- The Metro CERT Network will actively help foster local CERT affiliates, which could be a block, a neighborhood, a church, a school, or a city government entity.
- Metro CERT will be a gathering point for information on existing efforts, how to develop projects, and connecting projects to technical resources.

Structure

Metro CERT affiliate groups – These are communities that have now, or intend to embark on a local energy project to reduce energy use or increase clean energy. They may be as small as a block club or as big as a city. Metro CERT affiliates include neighborhoods, schools, congregations, local governments and more. These are the “members” of the Network.

Steering Committee – The steering committee is a small group that provides guidance and input to the coordinator of the Metro CERT Network, holding meetings 2-4 times per year as needed. The steering committee suggests areas (geographic or technology) that Metro CERT should focus more on and help make critical decisions about broad goals. Each affiliate should consider appointing one representative to the Metro CERT steering committee.

Chris Gilchrist, Office of Energy Security
Philipp Muessig, MPCA
Lissa Pawlisch, UMN RSDP
Tony Hainault, Metropolitan Energy Policy Coalition (MEPC)
Lola Schoenrich, Great Plains Institute
Sean Goswieski, Alliance for Sustainability
Neely Crane-Smith, Center for Energy and the Environment (CEE)
Jennifer McLoughlin, City of Woodbury
Paul Hoff, Mahtomedi Area Green Initiative (MAGI)
Jen Hassebroek, City of Oakdale
Clarence Chapman, St. Joan of Arc
Ellen Richter, White Bear Lake Energy and Environment Commission

Connection with statewide CERTs – Although operating as a network within the Twin Cities, the Metro CERT Network will coordinate closely at the staff level with the other statewide CERTs partners, including working on a joint website (www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org) and statewide conference.

Metro CERT activities

- Facilitate communication and networking opportunities among Metro CERT affiliates and resource organizations related to local energy projects.
- Assist with forming CERT affiliates in communities, congregations, or schools.
- Provide assistance on community energy planning and projects.
- Facilitate steering committee meetings.

These activities will be implemented by the Metro CERT Coordinator.

Metro CERT Affiliates

Sign up to be a Metro CERT Affiliate Group!

The Metro CERT Network believes that our society must fundamentally transform our energy system. A cooperative approach is necessary to live in our new carbon-free economy. Minnesota has passed some of the strongest legislation in the country and now we need a parallel track of grassroots action putting communities to work to fulfill the mandate.

Our pledge to you

By becoming a CERT Affiliate we will work to provide the resources to help you develop successful projects:

- Assistance with project templates, project analysis and selection
- Connection to resources (technical, organizing, and funding)
- Help measuring the success of your project
- Help in getting the most bang out of your energy dollars
- Monthly updates and quarterly newsletters with the latest community energy opportunities

Your commitment to the Network

We want to work with groups that are committed our common goals. To become a Metro CERT Affiliate your community simply needs to pledge to the following:

- Have a desire to work on local clean energy efforts, with a bias toward action, in the Twin Cities region
- Agree to work cooperatively with Metro CERT and other Affiliate groups towards our common goals to reduce energy use and increase renewable energy
- Be willing to be a mentor community to other communities that share our goals
- Agree to seek out projects that get the most bang for the energy dollar
- Consider appointing a representative to the Metro CERT steering committee
- You will agree not to lobby as a Metro CERT affiliate

CERTs Structure Diagram

