

# GO GREEN

## Great River Energy Part II

### How we can benefit from their knowledge



a brighter idea

Great River Energy (GRE) provides wholesale electricity to more than 1.7 million people via 28 distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Their new "green" headquarters in Maple Grove is one of the most energy efficient buildings in the country. The state-of-the-art office building is environmentally friendly and sets a good example to others.

Today's average consumer uses a lot more electricity than a decade ago. With today's increase in family entertainment centers, additional computers, large screen plasma TV's, etc., conserving energy without a lifestyle change means being smarter about electric use.

#### Conservation techniques GRE used in building their new home:

- A 160-ft., 200 kw wind turbine and solar photovoltaic panels on the roof to supply about 15 percent of their power.
- Harvesting natural light in a center atrium and in workspaces uses 40-50 percent less electricity plus improves employee health and productivity. Daylight and motion sensors increase/decrease artificial light, reducing energy demands.
- Water reduction through a pond plus a buried 20,000-gallon cistern that collect rain and snowmelt for flushing toilets and irrigation. They use 90 percent less drinkable water than standard office campuses, saving more than, saving 1.6 million gallons

annually. Motion sensors turn water faucets on/off, aerators reduce amounts used, and toilets have dual flush meters to adjust water quantity.

- Landscaped with native plants that need less irrigation. A living roof helps manage storm water, increases insulation and provides habitat for birds.
- Green elevators use a counterbalance mechanism and high efficiency motor.
- Less pavement used by building a smaller parking lot because of their close proximity to the Maple Grove Transit Station. Some employees use public transportation, carpool, bike, etc.
- Lake-source heating/cooling with a geothermal transfer system using Arbor Lake to cool and heat with underfloor displacement ventilating instead of overhead forced-air.
- Construction costs to get to a LEED platinum certification added about 5-6 percent in additional costs. Payback in energy savings is expected within 7 years.
- Recycling room -paper, glass, plastics, metals and organic food wastes are all recycled.
- They used 4 million pounds (40 percent) fly ash as a replacement for cement. Fly ash is a recycled by-product from their Coal Creek Station that is made when coal is burned to generate electricity. It strengthens concrete plus reduces greenhouse emissions.
- Ninety percent of construction waste was recycled.
- Non-toxic building ma-

terials were used to minimize environmental impact, i.e., wheat stalk particleboard that contained no formaldehyde. They also used 75 percent FSC certified wood.

#### Consumer energy tips for your home/business:

- Install compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) that use up to 75 percent less energy and produce the same amount of light. CFLs save money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Use a programmable thermostat and set your furnace back 10 degrees at night saving 10 percent.
- Use a rain barrel to capture water for your garden and landscaping to conserve drinking water.
- Weatherstrip homes/businesses and conduct a thorough energy audit.
- Upgrade when possible to efficient Energy Star appliances.
- Sign up for cycled air conditioning.
- Install ceiling fans and use interior fans to keep your home feeling cooler while using less power.
- Plant trees/shrubs around the area an air condition-

ing unit is located to save as much as 10 percent in electric costs.

- Install motion sensors/automated systems to monitor and control temperature and lighting.
  - Make saving energy a priority if and when you get the chance to build.
- Great River Energy is finalizing details of a 20 million dollar revolving zero/low-interest loan fund for commercial members in their distribution cooperatives' service area. The program helps finance additional construction costs for a LEED certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). There will also be some funds for existing commercial buildings to get them energy efficient. More information will be available about the commercial loan program through Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative later this summer.



CONNIE PETERSEN  
FREELANCE WRITER FROM AITKIN

**PAULBECK'S County Market**

**Hwy. 169 S. Aitkin**

EXPRESS GAS & CAR WASH  
FILL YOUR TANK TODAY!

218-927-6919 • Open 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.

**MILLE LACS ENERGY COOPERATIVE**

MEMBERS

#### BUY PRODUCTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



#### ENERGY STAR REBATES

Did you know that the average home spends about \$1,900 on energy costs every year? Change to appliances that have earned the ENERGY STAR®, and you can save \$80 a year in energy costs, while saving the environment.

Earning the ENERGY STAR® means a product meets strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Department of Energy.

To qualify for the ENERGY STAR® rebate, you must be a member of Mille Lacs Energy and verify the appliance is a qualified ENERGY STAR® product.



Remember, saving energy prevents pollution. By choosing ENERGY STAR®, you are helping prevent global warming and promote cleaner air without sacrificing the product quality and performance you expect.

Rebate forms can be found on our Web Site: <http://www.mlecmm.net/in-forms.htm> or call Deb Dean at 927-8246 or 888-724-9734 for forms or more information.

LEARN MORE AT [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)

36559 US Hwy 169 Aitkin MN 56431 [www.mlecmm.net](http://www.mlecmm.net)

**Aitkin Appliance Center**  
150 Southgate Drive  
Aitkin, MN 56431  
927-4100

Located Hwy. 169 South of Aitkin, next to True Value Hardware.  
Prices good through May 16, 2008  
• Mon. 10-6 • Tues.-Fri. 9-6 • Sat. 9-1

**Repair Service Now Available! Ask for Jay**

- Appliance Repair & Service
- For the do it yourself person - you can order your parts from us. Call 218-927-4100

**Check out four Showcases by R & K Cabinets!**

Prices are good through the 31st of May.

**May is MAYTAG Month**

- 12 months 0% Financing!\*
- Save up to \$500\* with purchase on select Maytag Appliances

or

- Save up to \$50\* with purchase of \$449 & above Maytag Appliances.

\*See Store for details

**Estate® Top Load Washer**

- Soft Touch Knobs
- Super Capacity Wash Basket
- 5 Cycles
- 3 Wash /Rinse Temp. Settings
- 3 Water Levels

\$299

ETW4300TQ

**Estate® Dryer**

- 5.9 Cu. Ft. Extra Large Capacity
- Soft Grip Knobs
- Automatically Dry
- 3 Temperature Settings

\$299

EED4300TQ

**Whirlpool® Front Load Washer**

- 3.4 Cu. Ft. I.E.C. Equivalent Capacity • 7 Cycles
- 6 Pt. Suspension System
- Quite Plus Noise Reduction
- Whitest Whites Cycle

\$699

WFW8300SW

**Whirlpool® Super Capacity Front Load Dryer**

- Accu Dry™ Sensing System
- 9 Automatic Cycles
- 6 Pt. Suspension System
- Electronic Controls
- End-of-Cycle Signal

\$699

WED8300SW

**Amana® Bottom Mount Refrigerator**

- 19 Cu. Ft.
- Energy Star
- H 66.875", W 29.625", D 33"

\$799

ABB1921DEW

**Maytag® Top Mount Refrigerator**

- 21 Cu. Ft.
- Energy Star
- H 66.25", W 32.5", D 31.375"

\$699

ATB2232MRB

**Maytag® Tall Tub Built-in Dishwasher**

- Tall Tub Capacity
- Tough Scrub Option
- Quiet Series 300 Sound Package

\$399

MDBM601AWW

**Amana® Counter Top Microwave**

- 800 Watts of Power
- 0.8 Cu. Ft. Capacity
- Touch Matic Control System
- Turn Table

\$99

AMC4080AAW

Advertised Special

\$399

Maytag® Gas Range

- 4.5 Cu. Ft.
- Free Standing
- 4 Cook top Burners
- Electronic Ignition

LP Conversion Kit Included

MGR 4451BDW