

Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group: Selected Recommendations (2008)

Maximize Savings from the Utility Conservation Improvement Program (CIP)

- Senate File 145 establishes an energy policy goal for Minnesota to achieve annual savings equal to 1.5% of annual retail energy sales of electricity and natural gas.

Improved Uniform Statewide Building Codes

- Amend state building codes to include minimum energy efficiency requirements and periodically update energy efficiency codes to provide long-term greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions.

Green Building Guidelines and Standards Based on Architecture 2030

- New building standards: GHG emission reductions of 100% by 2030 (70% by 2015). For existing buildings with major renovations, 50% reduction.
- Incentivized, voluntary program for private sector; mandatory for selected public sector buildings.

Incentives and Resources to Promote Combined Heat and Power (CHP)

- Promote natural gas- or biomass-fired CHP systems and remove existing barriers.
- Provide tax benefits, attractive financing arrangements, utility rebates, and other incentives to promote CHP technologies.

Non-Utility Strategies and Incentives to Encourage Energy Efficiency and Reduce GHG Emissions

- Complement (without duplicating) utility based programs to reduce GHG emissions from commercial/industrial facilities through energy efficiency and renewable energy practices and investments.

Energy Performance Disclosure

- Require utilities to provide an energy performance disclosure to parties owning any public, commercial, or residential property.
- Require property owners to make energy performance information available to prospective buyers or renters.
- Require utilities to provide an energy consumption history (past 12 months) for owners to share with prospective purchasers/renters of a property. This would include CO₂ emissions information.

Support Strong Federal Appliance Standards and Require High State Standards in the Absence of Federal Standards

- Adopt state appliance efficiency standards not covered by federal standards or where higher-than-federal standard efficiency requirements are appropriate.

Distributed Renewable Energy Incentives and/or Barrier Removal

- Expand distributed renewables through direct subsidies; tax credits/exemptions for up-front costs and for each kWh; feed-in tariffs; and applying distributed generation towards meeting the CIP savings goal.

Minneapolis-St. Paul Urban CO₂ Project Plan: Selected Recommendations (1993)

Residential CO₂ Reductions

- Support utility-sponsored demand side management programs, home energy rating systems, and “energy efficient mortgages” (inclusion of time-of-purchase energy efficiency improvements in total mortgage package).
- Better enforce existing building codes and rental energy efficiency standards, and support the adoption of stricter energy efficiency standards.

Commercial and Institutional CO₂ Reductions

- Expand the Small Commercial Lighting Program, and encourage businesses to participate in the federal Green Lights and Green Buildings programs.
- Mandate that new construction meet Minnesota’s illumination code.
- Encourage utilities to expand residential energy audit program to commercial and institutional buildings.

Industrial CO₂ Reductions

- Encourage utilities to offer individualized incentives to industry to reduce energy use, through both technical assistance and financial incentive programs. These should apply to process energy use, in addition to lighting and motors.
- Encourage industries to use cogeneration technology.
- Encourage industries to participate in the federal Green Lights and Green Buildings programs.

Initiate Integrated Resource Planning

- Encourage the State to require natural gas utilities to create Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs), as electric utilities are required to do. Through this process, study a “distributed utility” concept.

Provide Utilities with Financial Incentives to Implement all Energy Efficient Measures that are Cost-Effective

- Press the Public Utilities Commission to review existing incentive programs and consider further changes to utility incentive programs.

Expand Renewable or Low-Carbon Energy Sources

- Support the expansion of wind power; research and development of biomass energy products; and substitution of natural gas for coal and oil in generation.

Expand District Heating, Cooling, and Cogeneration Systems

- Collaborate with District Energy in St. Paul, the Minneapolis Energy Center, the University of Minnesota, NRG, Minnesota PUC, and other partners to identify opportunities to expand district heating/cooling and cogeneration facilities.