Xcel Energy®

TURNKEY APPROACH

Providing customers with full-service energy savings

XTRA

MAY 15, 2017 → VOLUME 17 • ISSUE 6

Content

On the Cover
Xcel Energy worked with Madison Equities on a Turnkey Services project in downtown St. Paul, which included the First National Bank Building. The edifice is an iconic and historic downtown structure, recognized for its giant red "1st" sign emblazoned on the top. For more information, please see page eight.

More confident than ever

(Editor's Note: Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO, periodically writes a blog on XpressNet, as well as other articles and communications. *Xtra* features Fowke's comments on a recurring basis to share his thoughts with a wider audience.)

I recently had the chance to step back and spend some focused time with my leadership team to hear from leading experts on trends impacting our business.

We had a thought-provoking couple of days. Not surprisingly, there is a lot going on and we covered a lot of ground.

A couple of my key takeaways included:

- Technology, data and consumer mobility have and will continue to disrupt industry. We have all seen that in the taxi and hotel industries, whose business models were turned upside down by companies like Uber and Airbnb. We know there are companies looking to find ways to get between Xcel Energy and our customers.
- Renewables, low-priced natural gas, energy efficiency and overall slow economic growth have and will continue to disrupt energy markets.
- Our customers will continue to expect safe and reliable service, while increasingly demanding a better customer experience. Our customers trust us to be their valued energy provider. We have earned that trust, and we need to keep it by continually becoming easier to do business with and providing them with top-quality service.

For every threat, there is an opportunity. These same threats can be opportunities to improve our connection to our customers. In fact, the discussion left me more confident than ever in our company and our strategy.

We are uniquely positioned to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, while keeping our prices flat. Not only can we provide the clean energy our customers want, we also can help them lower their bills with innovative efficiency programs.

"We are uniquely positioned to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, while keeping our prices flat."

We can make it easy for them to do business with us, to connect with us, to trust us. And we have the know-how to put technology to work so that we continue to deliver value with reliable, low-cost and nation-leading clean energy.

I walked away from this session motivated – motivated to keep driving us to improve our company each and every day.

The plug that won it all

Temporary covers provide safety for the public

The winning idea in the Journey to Zero Employee Safety Suggestion Contest came from the field and looks a little like a mushroom.

The concept was the creation of the Electric Utility Construction (EUC) group at Chestnut Service Center in Minneapolis. The winning idea – a utility test-hole plug – eventually was submitted by Tim Mahoney, foreman of EUC Safety.

Electric distribution crews use a horizontal directional boring process to install electrical wiring for new development in commercial and residential areas. Crews also use the drilling method to replace old wiring.

During this process, test holes are dug from above down to the located facility for reasons such as vacuuming, measuring and documentation. The test-hole plug was designed for crews to place in test holes. The plug itself consists of a cylindrical pipe, six-inches in diameter, with a metal plate welded onto one end of the pipe to act as a cover when installed into and over the test hole.

Developed as a temporary cover used between workdays by field crews using a test hole, the plug is aimed at providing efficiency to the process. It improves safety for both employees and the public by eliminating the need to dig and vacuum dirt multiple times from test holes, and allowing pedestrians to safely walk over the plugs.

"It's a simple idea, and they are easy for the guys to use," Mahoney said. "It saves us a ton of time."

Safety of customers and the public in general is a top priority of the invention, he added. The plug prevents pedestrians from tripping or stepping in the holes and reduces the impact of wear-and-tear on vehicles traveling over them.

Since the use of the test-hole plugs began, there have been no incidents with either employees or the public due to uncovered test holes in walkways or roads.

"It's being proactive, so people don't get hurt," Mahoney said. "It doesn't really matter if it's residential, commercial or rural."

Mahoney is the chair of the EUC Safety Committee, consisting of 12 members that meet on a monthly basis to discuss prevention and safety measures in the field. One electric construction crew member came to the committee last fall and explained the idea of using a plug for test holes.

There are now 25 to 30 test-hole plugs available for crews working in the field.

"This is an incredible group of 100-plus employees who understand why they work safely," said Todd Place, manager of Operations, Electric Utility Construction. "They are engaged and take actions to continuously improve their own and the public's safety.

Test-Hole Plug
Test holes are dug from above to locate facilities for reasons such as vacuuming, measuring and documentation. The test-hole plug was designed for crews to place in the test holes for safety reasons involving traffic and the public.

"Each issue or near-miss is reviewed to learn from an incident, and the safety committee then takes additional ownership to ensure both the public and employees are protected," he added. "I am proud to work with them."

Mahoney decided that if the safety contest was still open to submissions, the plug would be a worthy contender, he said, but he never expected that it would win the grand prize.

The Journey to Zero safety contest had a number of contestants in the running for prizes this past fall. A total of 423 suggestions came in from across the company, 30 of which made it to the final round.

The Safety department's call for innovative, tool or safety system improvements inspired a total of 423 suggestions from across the company, 30 of which were selected for the final round of judging. Suggestions came from both bargaining and non-bargaining workers alike (156 bargaining, 267 non-bargaining), as well as from all jurisdictions (224 NSP, 136 PSCO and 60 SPS).

The contest had one grand prize winner, one second prize winner and 10 third prize winners. Mahoney and the electric construction crew from Chestnut won $5,000 for the grand prize award. Casey Wagner, a steam fitter and welder from Minnesota's King Generating Station, was awarded second place and received $2,500. And third place winners each received a $1,000 award for their safety suggestions.

Mahoney is planning to use the prize money to do something special for the crew, and is keeping it a surprise. A celebration of the safety achievement will be held the end of May at Chestnut, when Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO, is scheduled to visit.

The winning safety suggestions will not be implemented across the company immediately, said Gary Lakey, vice president of Safety and Workforce Relations. They will first need to pass through legal, change management, and gas and electric standards for review. In addition, some non-winning entries will receive a second look and could be implemented, as well.

"Chestnut Service Center's Electric Utility Construction crew is a great example of employees always delivering for our customers by being team players," Lakey said. "We appreciate those who took the time to deliver their innovative ideas during the Safety Suggestion Contest and help continually improve our safety program."

The safety contest is an example of many ways Xcel Energy and its employees are 'Always Delivering' for customers, he added.

"The best way to innovate is to collaborate," Lakey said. "We must all work together, take responsibility, and push and hold each other accountable to maximize our potential."

Xcel Energy recognized as No. 1 in wind again

Company boasts 8 percent of total U.S. wind capacity

The American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) has named Xcel Energy the nation's top utility wind energy provider, a position it has held for more than a decade.

The organization recently released its annual market report and recognized the company for its sustained commitment and contribution to the wind industry.

"We recognized years ago the benefits of operating in a wind-rich area of the country, where we're able to harness the resource to meet customers' expectations for clean renewable energy," said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. "Wind energy plays a significant role in our future plans as an emissions-free resource that brings fuel savings and low-cost energy to customers."

Xcel Energy currently has more than 6,600 megawatts of wind energy on its system companywide. That is about 8 percent of the total U.S. wind capacity and enough to power about 3.3 million average-size homes.

Coming in second was Berkshire Hathaway Energy with 6,400 megawatts, and in third place was Southern California Edison with 3,700 megawatts. American Electric Power follows with 2,800 megawatts.

"Xcel Energy continues to hold the title for most wind energy on a utility system in 2016, even as other utilities also ramp up low-cost, reliable wind power," said Tom Kiernan, CEO of AWEA. "Xcel Energy's pioneering leadership shows how we can use even more of our great American wind resources while creating new jobs throughout the heartland."

Last month, Xcel Energy announced the nation's largest multi-state investment in wind energy with the addition of 3,380 megawatts of new wind generation to its system. The proposed wind farms will operate in seven states – Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Texas, New Mexico and Colorado.

The new wind energy brings economic value to Xcel Energy customers with a total of nearly $8 billion in fuel cost savings over the life of the projects. Federal production tax credits, combined with today's low wind costs, allow the company to secure low energy prices for wind.

Xcel Energy's wind portfolio will contribute to an estimated 45-percent reduction companywide in carbon emissions from 2005 levels by 2021, if the company is able to fully implement approved and proposed renewable energy plans.

States and communities served by Xcel Energy are already seeing economic benefits from existing wind farms. And new wind farms will benefit many more local communities by generating nearly $400 million in property taxes over the life of the projects.

Landowner payments are another economic benefit. Most of the new wind farms are large projects of 200 megawatts or more.

Wind developers generally estimate about 200 temporary construction jobs and a dozen full-time jobs for a large wind farm. In total, the new wind farms will create 2,000 construction jobs and full-time jobs. ←

Around the Company

Steamboat Switching

Fred Fuller (center), electrician specialist, uses a diagram to explain the demonstration switching recently conducted at the company's Steamboat Springs Substation as part of the emergency switchman training for linemen from Yampa Valley Electric Association, a wholesale customer of the company. Fuller discussed how to use the diagram to understand the layout of the sub, and the position that personnel need to be in to accomplish their tasks safely and efficiently.

Xcel Energy sells natural area to state along Wisconsin's Chippewa River

Xcel Energy's long history of partnering with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recently expanded to include the sale of a portion of the company's Tyrone property in the state.

The Joint Finance Committee approved the sale of nearly 1,000 acres along the Chippewa River to the WDNR for approximately $1.9 million during a meeting on April 24. The property is located just northeast of Durand in the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area. Xcel Energy has owned the land since the mid-1970s.

"We would like to thank everyone, especially the Joint Finance Committee, Rep. Warren Petryk and many local groups for their support and work to complete the transition of this unique asset to state ownership," said Mark Stoering, president of Xcel Energy-Wisconsin.

"Successful completion of this land transaction ensures continued land management and recreational opportunities for years to come."

The WDNR has served as a valuable land-management partner with Xcel Energy for many years, particularly at the Tyrone site. The property includes access to the Lower Chippewa River, Chippewa River State Trail and a canoe landing.

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In addition, there are several rare prairie and oak savannahs with a rich diversity of notable bird, plant and insect species.

Over the last decade Xcel Energy has managed significant cleanup and land-management efforts at the Tyrone property. Many of the improvements can be attributed to partnerships with the WDNR, Lower Chippewa River Alliance, National Wild Turkey Federation and The Prairie Enthusiasts.

TURNKEY SERVICES

St. Paul effort a boon to historic buildings

A complete service that leaves the end result ready for immediate use: The definition of "turnkey" is the essence of Xcel Energy's energy-efficiency program by the same name.

Turnkey Services is a full-service effort that provides customers with both onsite assessments and free implementation support for various energy-savings improvements. The company has been offering the program since 2012, and more than 1,100 assessments and projects have been completed since then.

Recently, the program played a major role in Minnesota's largest energy-efficiency effort ever – saving in one project the energy used by 1,200 average households, which resulted in an energy-efficiency rebate of approximately $1.5 million.

Xcel Energy worked with Madison Equities on the project, owners of three major buildings grouped together in downtown St. Paul – the First National Bank Building, US Bank Center and the 375 Jackson Building. The First National Bank Building, in particular, is an iconic St. Paul structure, recognized for its giant red "1st" sign emblazoned on the top.

The buildings' systems, however, were still operating with old, outdated equipment. Old as in manual pushbuttons from the 1960s, needed to physically turn fans and pumps on and off every morning and evening.

Madison Equities' goal through the Turnkey Services program aimed at retrofitting lighting, heating, cooling and other systems with modern electronic controls to create completely

intelligent buildings. To create a priority list, they turned to Xcel Energy and a third-party contractor to develop a comprehensive plan.

"This was one of the largest energy-saving endeavors Xcel Energy has been involved with in terms of a comprehensive holistic project in the office-building segment," said Michael Hepfler, a DSM field representative with the Business Solutions Center. "It was beyond ambitious and impressive for the customer to do all three of these buildings back-to-back-to-back within a year.

"Overhauling the mechanical infrastructure serving more than 1.8 million square feet of facility space is a monumental undertaking," he added. "It certainly posed many interesting logistical and financial challenges. But a steadfast determination by the customer and all entities involved helped complete this massive project."

The Turnkey program is a great place to start when a building owner wants to identify and undertake energy-efficiency measures for an entire building, said Sherryl Volkert, senior product portfolio manager with Customer Solutions. The program starts with an onsite assessment and follows that with free implementation services. Most projects identified in an assessment also qualify for a 30 percent bonus rebate, if completed within a year of the assessment.

"We review their systems to find the best options for the building's specific needs," Volkert said. "We then generate a

report that outlines all of the potential measures and savings – and go through the numbers with the customer to ensure they have a good understanding of the recommendations."

Financing was a key factor for Madison Equities. In addition to Xcel Energy rebates to help offset the cost, the St. Paul Port Authority provided financing through its Trillion BTU Energy Conservation Program and the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program.

The Trillion BTU effort loans businesses up to 100 percent of the project cost with no money down to complete the efficiency projects. Similarly, PACE provides affordable, long-term capital to help building owners complete large-scale, clean-energy improvements. In addition, Madison Equities also discovered roughly $600,000 in tax credits to further offset costs.

After reviewing the report, the initial rebates, bonus rebates and financing options, Madison decided the overall $12 million investment would be well worth the estimated return, Hepfler said.

"The Turnkey program provides benefits regardless of building size, but this project was the result of a perfect storm," he said. "We had the right customer, the right building, the right timing, the right resources and a commitment to get it done."

In all, Madison Equities completed the following efficiency measures over the months-long process:

- A fully integrated Building Automation System/Energy Management System, controlling and monitoring lighting schedules, chiller plants, cooling towers, heating systems, air-handling units and more. The systems also are capable of controlling temperature set points and humidity levels for individual rooms, allowing for detailed control of tenant spaces and increased occupant comfort.
- More than 15,000 light fixtures in common areas and tenant spaces were retrofitted with approximately 45,000 LED lamps and 1,400 occupancy sensors.
- All fan and pump motors were replaced with premium-efficiency motors and fitted with efficient variable-frequency drives, totaling approximately 2,100 horsepower.
- Two existing chiller units installed in the early 1960s and two existing chillers from the 1970's were replaced by three high-efficiency, magnetic-bearing chillers. Those upgrades required delivering the new HVAC systems via a crane dozens of stories up at the top of the buildings.

"More and more customers are realizing that we can provide a comprehensive plan and assistance so they don't feel overwhelmed by the size of a project," Volkert said. "For instance, Madison knew we would help them, so they decided to take on the effort. It's that partnership that provided the foundation for this successful project."

"Working through these projects together as a team strengthened the relationships between Madison Equities, Xcel Energy, the Saint Paul Port Authority and the contractors," Hepfler added. "The resulting energy savings shows Madison and Xcel Energy's commitment to bettering its community and its commitment to the environment."

In closing and memoriam, Scott Goltz, president of Madison Equities, made the decision to undertake the project and played a key role in making it happen. He unexpectedly passed away on April 3, 2017. ←

St. Paul Project

Xcel Energy's Turnkey Services program recently played a major role in one of Minnesota's largest energy-efficiency efforts in 30 or 40 years. The project centered on the historic First National Bank Building in downtown St. Paul, featured at top in a postcard mailed in Aug. 23, 1951. Above is the building's elevator lobby, while on page 10, HVAC equipment is lifted into place during the effort.

Company's DSM efforts some of the best in nation

Xcel Energy has one of the longest-running and most successful Demand-Side Management (DSM) programs in the country, which helps customers to reduce bills and create efficiencies. Based on the 2016 American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy's scorecard rankings for statewide energy-efficiency policy and program efforts, Minnesota and Colorado ranked 10 and 14, respectively.

"Our programs offer a clear benefit to customers," said Sherryl Volkert, senior product portfolio manager with Customer Solutions. "They help make Xcel Energy an attractive energy provider and partner."

However, there are other reasons for the company to offer them.

"As a regulated utility, we are required by many of our operating states to offer energy-efficiency programs to customers," she said. "The main reason revolves around environmental benefits, with many customers and stakeholders understandably concerned with carbon reduction."

Another key reason is the financial benefits they provide customers.

"When energy demand decreases, it helps Xcel Energy delay investments in additional generating capacity, Volkert explained. "If customers are using less energy, we don't have to build more power plants to keep up with demand. Our system reliability is more easily maintained, and we can instead invest in infrastructure improvements and operations – boosting our overall efficiency and keeping our costs low."

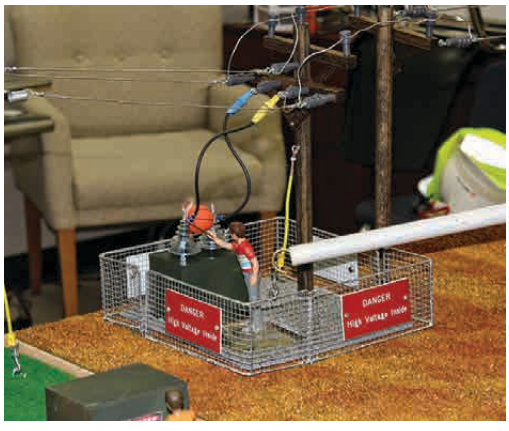
But DSM also impacts the company's bottom line.

"DSM program costs are recoverable due to the fact that we are providing societal and environmental benefits through the programs," she said. "For every kilowatt-hour saved, we are able to earn back what we spend in program costs through customer bills, plus earn an incentive.

"In fact, this incentive helps us meet our earnings target each year," she added. "Despite the fact that we may be selling less energy, we can make up for that reduced revenue through recovery methods. These regulations exist to ensure that the needs of customers, the environment and Xcel Energy are met."

Public Safety Simulators

Concrete examples of hazards make a difference



Xcel Energy is committed to public safety and is active in educating the public about the potential risks related to electric and natural gas service. But explaining safety protocols around company facilities can cause yawns and blank expressions.

However, telling people real-life stories – and showing them concrete examples of hazards and how to avoid them – often makes them perk up and listen. To that end, the company's Public Safety group has two tools that it regularly uses in public-safety demonstrations – Hazard Hamlet and Power Town.

The tabletop displays graphically illustrate potential risks related to gas and electric service and equipment. Combined with storytelling by Lori Warner and Erica Fink, coordinators with Public Safety, those safety presentations come to life and actively engage audiences.

"Both safety simulators are very effective in bringing various scenarios to life and getting our audiences interested," Warner said. "We purchased the Power Town safety simulator last year as an upgrade to our older electric safety demo boards, and used it at the Minnesota State Fair with good success. It has more components and can demonstrate live electric-arcing scenarios."

"Essentially you can think of Hazard Hamlet as the G-rated Disney version of the two safety simulators," Fink said. "Everyone can use it – it's safe and you don't need special safety equipment, so it's good for schools and similar venues.

"Power Town, on the other hand, is 10,000 volts of electricity," she said. "You must wear protective equipment and be thoroughly trained to use it. It's for real."

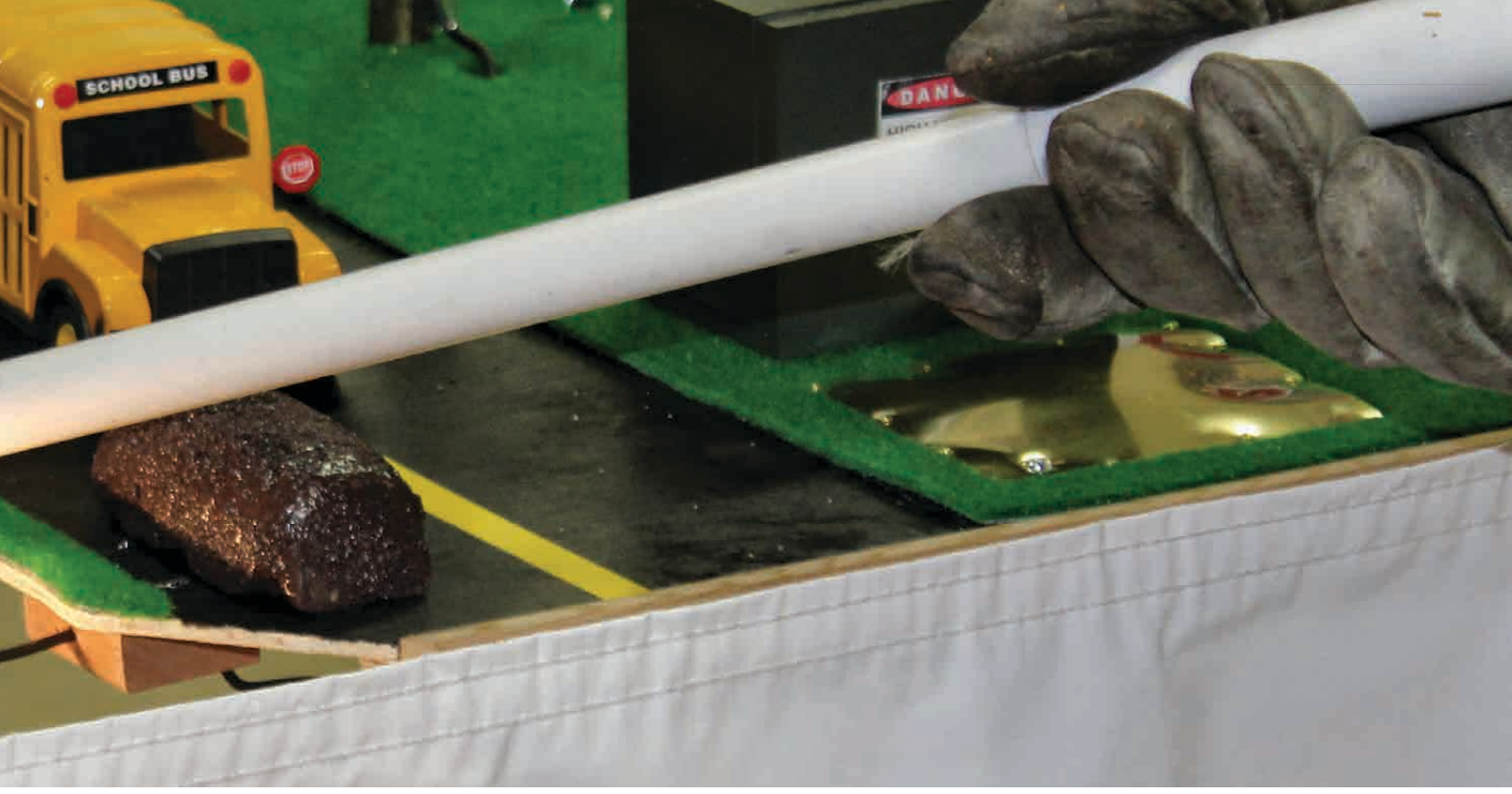
The main focus of the two simulator presentations is electric safety, and the demonstrations illustrate scenarios for downed power lines, excavation damage, trees/poles/kites/ladders, substations, transformer and other dangers. However, because Xcel Energy is a combined gas and electric utility, natural gas safety also is incorporated into the effort.

The public-safety presentations share three principal messages: Stay Away, Stay Alive (or Look Up and Live), Call 811 Before You Dig, and how to recognize and respond to a natural gas leak (which includes "rotten egg" mercaptan scratch-and-sniff cards).

Audiences for the safety presentations include a wide range of customers, schools, excavators, emergency responders and third-party contractors, Fink said. Venues and organizations include community safety fairs, chamber of commerce meetings, fire department open houses, elementary school assemblies and other community or organization meetings.

Warner generally covers Xcel Energy South, and Fink the company's northern region. The in-person presentations are held by invitation, and the pair supports as their schedules allow. Public Safety also has the Employee Ambassador Program, which trains and coordinates volunteer employees to help with public-safety presentations.

"Our ambassadors help us in reaching out to the public,"



Public Safety

The company's Public Safety group has two tools that it regularly uses in public-safety demonstrations – telling people real-life stories, and showing them concrete examples of hazards and how to avoid them.

Warner said. "Often, they know a teacher, firefighter or first responder, and will sign them up to receive the safety materials we have that are tailored to those professions, as well as follow up to make sure they're using them effectively."

Fink, who also serves as a sheriff's reserve officer, works more with first responders, fire departments, and emergency-services managers. Her largest presentation venue by far, however, is the Minnesota State Fair.

The state's event is the largest state fair in the United States measured by average daily attendance, and is the second-largest state fair in the United States by total attendance. So Public Safety is able to reach a very broad and large audience over a short timeframe. The fair runs for 12 days from late August into early September, ending on Labor Day.

To help with the enormous task of holding ongoing presentations for 12 hours a day throughout the 12-day run, Fink said she is fortunate to enlist the help of a team of employee volunteers. In preparation for last year's state fair – attended by about 1.9 million people – she held several sessions to train nearly 80 volunteers in how to use Power Town. Those volunteers then provided more than 170 hours of service during the fair.

"The crux of the matter is that our volunteers get it – they understand the importance of what we're doing in terms of helping to keep people safe," Fink said. "Some of them used to see similar demonstrations as kids with their parents, so this is now a multi-generational effort for them. Or some are linemen who really understand the hazards and want the next generation to stay safe.

"And honestly, it's a fun opportunity to be part of the state fair and hang out with your fellow Minnesotans," she added. "It's an important opportunity, and in spite of the long hours and all of the work involved, I look forward to it every year."

Warner is similarly enthusiastic about the work she does to promote public awareness of electric and gas safety issues. In particular, she enjoys working in schools with kids and their parents.

"I enjoy presenting scenarios that make the situations real, relevant and concrete for people," she explained. "On the Hazard Hamlet board, for example, there's a transformer box. I'll tell the story of little boy who thinks it's a good place to hide.

"I explain that electricity always looks for a place to 'go to ground," and that our bodies can be that path because we're made up of water," she said. "And then I ask what might happen to Johnny – and the kids are excited and engaged and really get it.

"It's a ton of fun," she said. "I love doing it because it's so important – and effective."

On another front, an LMS course new for 2017 has been developed to share information and educate employees about Public Safety programs and activities to further spread the word about utility safety. Completion of the course will enable some employees to receive a $25 contribution to their Health Savings Account.

Xcel Energy again a Forbes most-admired company

News Brief

Xcel Energy has landed on Fortune magazine's "World's Most-Admired Company" list for the third consecutive year. The company ranked fourth in the Gas and Electric Utilities category.

Fortune collaborated with Korn Ferry Hay Group to conduct the annual survey of corporate reputation. The survey asks executives, directors and analysts to rank companies in their industry using nine criteria, including items such as investment value, innovation and social responsibility.

Xcel Energy ranked third for social responsibility and long-term investment value and fourth for innovation.

"This type of recognition demonstrates that we're delivering every day and others are noticing," said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. "It is a testament to the dedication that our employees bring to their jobs.

"Being ranked among the world's most-admired companies is an affirmation of our hard work," he added, "and is a reminder to continue striving to improve."

Photo Op

Black Dog on Approach

Tom Zellmer, a principal engineer with Energy Supply, took this photo of Black Dog Generating Station in Burnsville, Minnesota. He was in the air at the time on Feb. 2, on descent to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Black Dog is being readied for a new era of energy production with a new gas-fired combustion turbine that is being installed inside the existing plant.

Editor's Note: *"Photo Op" is a standing feature in Xtra. Each issue, a photo submitted by a reader or produced by a member of Corporate Communications will be published. Please submit high-resolution digital photos to the editor at the email address listed on the back page of this publication. By submitting images for "Photo Op," employees give Xtra permission to run the photos.*

Letters

'They were a very professional crew'

Dear Xcel Energy:

Thanks for the excellent support when my power went out. There was a bad portion of underground wire from the pole to the transformer at the house.

The crew worked into the night to fix it and replace the transformer. They were a very professional crew.

Also the crew that returned later to repair the lawn did a very good job, too, and were very friendly. Thanks again for the great work.

—Morris Dodge, Pine Island, Minn.

'Did a great job putting stuff back together'

Dear Xcel Energy:

I had a problem with my service wires being pulled from the house due to a large tree branch falling. Your company got someone out very quickly.

I'm not sure what the technician's name was, but he was very professional and courteous, and did a great job putting stuff back together again. Much appreciation to him for the great service.

—Susan O'Nell, Minneapolis, Minn.

'He was such a gentleman'

Dear Xcel Energy:

We are writing to compliment one of your service employees who restored our electrical service and alerted us to some wiring in need of updating. He was one of the most respectful and professional technicians we have ever met.

He showed me where the problem was and recommended that we have it remedied, which we are doing. He was such a gentleman.

His name was Brett Schnur (Troubleman), I believe. Please pass our thanks on to him.

—Jane and Paul Steingraeber, La Crosse, Wis.

News Briefs

Online Xtra subscription available for employees and retirees

Employee readers of *Xtra* can now opt out of receiving the print version of Xcel Energy's employee and retiree publication, and instead read the online version on XpressNet or via a portal on the company's website at xcelenergy.com.

To complete the opt-out process, employees need to fill out a form on the Xtra homepage of XpressNet, providing their name, employee ID and company email address. Those who choose to opt out will receive an email when a new issue is available for online viewing.

The opt-out form and online versions of *Xtra* can be found by clicking on the "Xtra Online" link, located at the bottom of the XpressNet homepage. The online edition of Xtra also can be found at xcelenergy.com/Xtra – or from the home page, look under Community/Community Involvement/Retiree Directory.

In addition, retirees can opt out of receiving the print version, or request address changes regarding home delivery of the print edition, by calling the Human Resources Service Center at 800.689.7662. They also are invited to visit the webpage noted above (or xcelenergy.com/Retirees) to view the latest issue, as well as a number of back issues of *Xtra*.

As a reminder, Xcel Energy's main phone number is 800.328.8226. Just hit "0" for an operator to contact various departments and employees.

Monticello nuclear plant begins refueling period

After 500 days of continuous operation, Minnesota's Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant began its 28th biennial refueling outage last month. The work brings 800 contractors from across the country to Monticello for approximately one month.

More than 6,000 work activities will be performed by Xcel Energy employees and the contracted workforce. The power plant will be refueled, which will replace more than 4 million fuel pellets arranged in nearly 13,500 fuel rods.

Those fuel rods are built into 148 fuel assemblies within the reactor core. A large number of safety inspections will also be conducted on the unit's reactor vessel and turbine generator system.

The Monticello plant is the area's largest employer with approximately 600 full-time workers. According to a newly released study by the Nuclear Energy Institute, the plant generates about $447 million in overall economic activity and $96 million in disposable income each year for workers in Minnesota.

The carbon-free energy provided by Xcel Energy's nuclear facilities is a component of Xcel Energy's long term energy strategy, including the plan to generate more than 60 percent carbon-free electricity in the Upper Midwest by 2030.

"We live and work here in Monticello and are committed to the success of this community," said Pete Gardner, site vice president of Monticello. "The activities we complete during a refueling support the regional economy while positioning our plant and company to deliver reliable, carbon-free electricity to our customers."

Mike+You=Cure

Sherco retiree completes the PCT as one of three trips for one cause

Two-thousand, six-hundred and fifty miles trekked by foot over the span of four months – battling the elements as the land changed from scorching desert to snow-covered mountains.

Committing to walking the Pacific Crest Trail is not for the faint at heart, but Mike Garland knew it was what he had to do.

An Xcel Energy retiree, Garland has known a few too many people who died from battles with cancer. Garland lost his father, his grandfather, his uncle and two former Xcel Energy coworkers at Minnesota's Sherco Generating Station to cancer.

Like many people, Garland wanted to do something to support efforts that combat cancer. After researching a variety of organizations, he found his match. He has since made it his mission to bring awareness to the American Cancer Society (ACS), the leading nonprofit cancer research center and resource organization in the country.

Garland started his journey in the small town of Becker, Minnesota, where he participated in the local Relay for Life, an ACS fundraising event. He knew the town was small, yet he wondered if he could reach out to a larger network.

"What is something that one guy can do to raise a little money and awareness for the American Cancer Society?" Garland asked himself. And with that question, the idea of a bike trip originated.

Garland wanted a journey wild enough that people would follow him on Facebook to track his trip. He decided on a bike trip from Minnesota to Oregon – and back.

On the bike trip, Garland stopped in cafes and started with an audience of two that would soon grow to 20 or more. Passersby were eager to hear his story, and he loved to share it.

"My journeys give me the platform to talk to people," he said.

Garland also documented his trip every day, sharing with his followers on Facebook. Those followers began to increase – and so did the donations. Facebook became the platform for his Mike+You=Cure page, the same name of his team at the Becker County Relay For Life.

After completing the bike trip out to Oregon and back to Minnesota, he contemplated what could be next. Soon after, he had his next plan and soon started training for hiking the entire length of the West Coast from Mexico to Canada on the Pacific Coast Trail (PCT).

This was not an easy feat, he learned, even after months of preparation. Altogether, he lost around 50 pounds, shed seven toenails and wore through five different pairs of shoes. Over time, he learned to lighten his load to only 35 pounds of gear,

Sherco retiree Mike Garland walked the Pacific Crest Trail – from Mexico to Canada – to help support the American Cancer Society.

including five to seven days' worth of food.

While averaging almost a marathon a day, infections were inevitable and terrible blisters formed on his feet. He even dealt with stomach cramps and problems after contracting giardia, a waterborne parasite.

Along the way, however, he also made time to share his story at numerous Relay for Life events and at various high schools.

In addition to plenty of fellow hikers, Garland ran into many types of wildlife during his trek. One night, deer dragged his trekking poles and a shirt down the trail.

"The deer were horrible," he said. "Many are salt-deprived up in the mountains. I found my shirt soaking wet down the trail. They had gummed the heck out of it."

And there were the bears. During a two-week stretch that Garland's nephew joined him on the trail, they encountered a 600-pound bear standing on its hind legs and looking right at them.

"We looked at each other and said, 'That's a big bear,'" Garland said. "But it turned and ran down the mountain."

And again, when he was 2,400 miles down the trail, he came across a large bear and her two cubs, eating huckleberries along the trail, but they also eventually wobbled into the woods.

With or without bears, the PCT can be dangerous. Three people died on the trail while Garland was on it, he said, one by heart attack, one who went missing and another who fell down the side of a mountain.

"The things that I have done have been thrilling, but they are also hard," Garland said.

But the purpose of his trip was much greater than the struggles encountered, he said. On his trip, Garland met more than 50 cancer survivors hiking parts of the trail.

One hiker he met had an inoperable brain tumor. Yet, the hiker was out on the PCT only weeks after undergoing a trial surgery in Washington. Garland even met two cancer researchers from California.

After successfully completing two massive trips, Garland is looking to do something different yet again. This summer, he plans to leave on a canoe tip from the headwaters of the Mississippi River and paddle to the Gulf of Mexico – no doubt gaining more followers and meeting more amazing people.

If you are interested in donating to the American Cancer Society, please go to www.cancerorg/donate. To donate specifically to Mike Garland's team, go to www.acsevents.org, select donate and search for Mike Garland. More information about the resources offered by the American Cancer Society is at www.cancer.org. ←

People

Friends We'll Miss

Kenneth H. Allen, 97, fitter serviceman, Gas, Grand Junction, Colo., died on March 10, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1952 to 1992.

Verna E. Ash, 98, secretary, Gas Distribution, Lipan Service Center, Denver, Colo., died on Oct. 24, 2016. She worked for PSCo from 1953 to 1981.

Dorothy C. Balent, 91, senior teller, Cash and Banking, General Office, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Oct. 20, 2013, She worked for NSP from 1948 to 1983.

Ned Black, 93, engineer, Electric Distribution, Denver, Colo., died on Feb. 3, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1956 to 1986.

Louis Caskinette, 95, superintendent, Overhead, Lake Superior, Michigan, died on Feb. 18, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1945 to 1983.

Christine Ellen Charnock, 57, senior fuels accountant, Commercial Accounting , 414 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., died on March 19, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy from 1977 until the time of her death.

Donald M. Cossel, 67, mechanic specialist, Production, Valmont Station, Boulder, Colo., died on Dec. 4, 2016. He worked for PSCo from 1972 to 2002.

DeVerne L. Cote, 88, maintenance specialist, Electric Operations, Chippewa Falls, Wis., died on Feb. 27, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1952 to 1988.

Norman L. Cote, 89, district representative, Electric Operations, Sioux Falls, S.D., died on March 6, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1953 to 1986.

Donald Davis, 82, field supervisor, Substations, Mesa County Operations Center, Grand Junction, Colo., died on Nov. 18, 2016. He worked for PSCo from 1971 to 1994.

James W. De Courcy, 85, supervisor, System Control Center, General Office, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Nov. 30, 2016. He worked for NSP from 1952 to 1986.

John C. Dillon, 79, superintendent, Electric Construction, Mankato Service Center, Mankato, Minn., died on May 18, 2016. He worked for NSP from 1958 to 1992.

Daniel Duran, 77, senior storekeeper, CLF&P Stores, Cheyenne Service Center, Cheyenne, Wyo., died on Feb. 4, 2017. He worked for CLF&P from 1976 to 2001.

Daryl Fischer, 80, manager, Fleet Services, Chestnut Service Center, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Feb. 27, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1955 to 1995.

Francis Fowler, 92, operations manager, Colorado, died on Feb. 17, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1949 to 1986.

Glenn Haskin, 82, shift unit manager, Pawnee Station, Brush, Colo., died on Feb. 6, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1964 to 1994.

Jack Korthof, 95, construction manager, Northwest Division, Minnesota, died on Feb. 24, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1951 to 1982.

Dorothy S. Lapin, 97, stenographer, Information Systems, Denver, Colo., died on March 1, 2017. She worked for PSCo from 1964 to 1984.

John Loken, 86, general services coordinator, Information Services, General Office, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Feb. 9, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1988 to 2001.

Rodney V. Lorenz, 54, operations supervisor, Jones Station, Lubbock, Texas, died on Feb. 22, 2017. He worked for SPS from 1990 until the time of his death.

Michael Maki, 65, material handler thereafter, Operations, St. Cloud Service Center, St Cloud, Minn., died on Feb. 10, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1982 to 2016.

James L. McDermott, 83, linecrew foreman, Electric Distribution, White Bear Service Center, White Bear Lake, Minn., died on March 3, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1951 to 1995.

Terrance B. Olby, 63, Wisconsin, died on March 3, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1977 to 2010.

Robert A. Phillips, 84, gas utilization serviceman, Lake Superior, Park Falls, Wis., died on Feb. 27, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1959 to 1991.

Ricky J. Platt, 69, planner, Front Range Engineering, Evergreen Service Center, Evergreen, Colo., died on Feb. 14, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1967 to 2008.

Dean L. Schmidt, 79, customer service representative, 990 Bannock, Denver, Colo., died on Feb. 8, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1926 to 1993.

Melvin Schmidt, 92, superintendent, Installation and Maintenance, Minot Service Center, Minot, N.D., died on Feb. 10, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1950 to 1997.

Marvin Schneider, 88, line inspector, Transmission, Minnesota, died on Oct. 4, 2016. He worked for NSP from 1978 to 1982.

Paul Sisson, 76, lead fitter-serviceman, Gas Construction, Pueblo, Colo., died on Feb. 3, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1964 to 2001.

William A. Sorenson, 82, shift supervisor, Sherco Plant, Becker, Minn., died on Feb. 8, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1957 to 1990.

James E. Steinert, 89, conveyor operator, Yard Operations, Riverside Generating Plant, Minneapolis, Minn., died on March 13, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1950 to 1989.

Robert F. Stemper, 86, account analyst, Saint Paul, Minn., died on Feb. 11, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1952 to 1988.

Victor D. Velasquez, 71, working foreman, Construction, Materials Distribution Center, Henderson, Colo., died on Feb. 28, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1968 to 2004.

Richard Walker, 75, dispatcher gas supply, Gas Control, Rice Street , Saint Paul, Minn., died on Feb. 27, 2017, He worked for NSP from 1972 to 1994

Harold F. Washington, 59, mail bus driver, Customer Service, Lipan Service Center, Denver, Colo., died on Feb. 8, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1985 to 2017.

Robert Waters, 90, merchandise salesman, St. Paul, Minn., died on Feb. 9, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1956 to 1969.

Retiring

David Benefiel (thegreatdavestock@gmail.com), foreman, Gas Services, Kipling Service Center, Lakewood, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

Ray C. Birdow, storekeeper, Stores, Lakewood, Colo., retired on May 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Larry A. Blair, storekeeper, Stores, Boulder, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 40 years.

Danny Blechinger (dblechinger224129@charter.net), system operator, Hydro, Eau Claire, Wis., retired on April 7, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

David Bridges (dkbridges1@live.com), supervisor, Technical Services, Brighton Service Center, Brighton, Colo., retired on May 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 29 years.

Maurice D. Bursau, field operator, Gas Operations, Wiggins, Colo., retired on May 30, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

William Carlson, foreman, System Protection Operations, Eau Claire Service Center, Eau Claire, Wis., retired on March 17, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Angel Castro (electricangel73@yahoo.com), electric meterman, Meter Department, Amarillo, Texas, retired on Feb. 10, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Jim Chapman, line crew foreman, Operations, Line Shop, St. Croix Falls, Wis., retired on Feb. 24, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Steve Derleth (derleth906@msn.com), radioactive materials shipping coordinator, Radiation Protection, Prairie Island Nuclear Plant, Welch, Minn., retired on May 2, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 40 years.

Kathy Doughty (pmdoughty@gmail.com), manager, Claims Services, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on April 6, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy for 25 years.

Richard Dyer (dyer04@msn.com), working foreman, Line Construction, Denver, Colo., retired on April 14, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

Arline Echandia (bighair23@gmail.com), generation reliability and analysis coordinator, Energy Supply, Denver, Colo., retired on Feb. 28, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy for 19 years.

Steven D. Egan, lead service fitter, Lipan Service Center, Denver, Colo., retired on April 17, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Patrick J. Faber (patfaber@icloud.com), line crew foreman, Overhead, White Bear Lake, Minn., retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years

Charles Ferrill, technician specialist, System Protection, Table Mountain, Colorado, retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Gerald Gilles, operator, Energy Supply, French Island Plant, La Crosse, Wis., retired on Feb. 24, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 31 years.

Jerry Gingras, coordinator, Coal Yard, King Plant, Bayport, Minn., retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Jeff Hasper (hasp69@outlook.com), technician, Geospatial Data Technology, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retired on Dec. 9, 2016. He worked for Xcel Energy for 10 years.

Mike Henderson (mikemeloh@ieee.org), principal production engineer, Technical Resources and Compliance, Materials Distribution Center, Henderson, Colo., retired on March 15, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Jay Johnson, working foreman, Gas Emergency, Denver, Colo., retired on April 18, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 40 years.

Arnell K. Jones (akjones949@msn.com), working foreman, Line, Gateway Service Center, Aurora, Colo., retired on May 5, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Thomas S. Kaiser, designer, Design, Gateway Service Center, Aurora, Colo., retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Bruce B. Karna (bruce.karna@charter.net), blacksmith, Maple Grove, Minn., retired on April 3, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 30 years.

Dean Keuten, mechanic specialist, Thermal Energy, Denver Steam Plant, Denver, Colo., retired on March 13, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 21 years.

Edward E. Kidneigh, Jr., working foreman, System Testing, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retired on April 21, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 44 years.

Chuck Kinney (chujul@live.com), plant manager, Operations, Red Wing Generating Plant, Red Wing, Minn., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Barbara Kratochvil (bkratochvil@comcast.net), supervisor, Credit and Collections, St. Paul, Minn., retired on April 10, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy for 42 years.

Christopher Laubhan, meter reader, Meter Reading, Arvada Headquarters, Arvada, Colo., retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Jay Law, plant equipment operator, Operations, Sherco Plant, Becker, Minn., retired on April 21, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 30 years.

Eugene Luedecke (ditchsnake@centurylink.net), lead fitter, Gas Construction, Gateway Service Center, Aurora, Colo., retired on April 21, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

Michael J. Moravec, lineman, Line Department, Arvada Service Center, Arvada, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Robert E. Oliver, senior fitter, Gas Operations, Evergreen, Colo., retired on April 21, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Debra Ann Panek (debrapanek@gmail.com), operations manager, Gas and Electric Meter, Rice Street Service Center, St. Paul, Minn., retired on May 5, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy for 41 years.

Terry Pickens, director, Nuclear Regulatory Policy, Headquarters, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on April 3, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Jerry Quinonez, lead fitter, Gas Construction, Valentia Service Center, Denver, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

David Roepke, meter reader, Meter Reading, Alamosa, Colo., retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Bruce Runyan (brucerunyan@reagan.com), manager, Engineering Support, Comanche Station, Pueblo, Colo., retired on April 14, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

William Sanchez (a54tloc55@live.com), mechanic, Transportation, Boulder, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Paul Schommer, system relay specialist, Maple Grove Service Center, Maple Grove, Minn., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Leonard D. Smith (1smithvr7@msn.com), senior serviceman, Gas Emergency Response, Gateway Service Center, Aurora, Colo., retired on April 17, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 32 years.

Jerry Souders (jsouders@bregnan.com), senior storekeeper, Stores, High Plains Division, Sterling, Colo., retired on April 14, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Jeff Stock (stockmk@charter.net), operator in charge, Energy Supply, French Island Generating Plant, La Crosse, Wis., retired on April 4, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 29 years.

Robert N. Swank, plant operator, Valmont Generating Station, Boulder, Colo., retired on April 7, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Randy Utecht, supervisor, Gas Emergency Response and Repair, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Bo Van Beekom (bovanbeekom@yahoo.com), director, Distribution Management System Projects, Lubbock, Texas, retired on April 13, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 42 years.

Loren Vawser, designer, Design, Summit Operations, Silverthorne, Colo., retired on March 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Ron Velzke (ronelkslayer57@aol.com), gas troubleman, Faribault Service Center, Faribault, Minn., retired Jan. 20, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 31 years.

James Wiley, specialist, System Protection, Golden, Colo., retired on Feb. 21, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Gary A. Wolfe (wolfeserenata@gmail.com), mechanical specialist, Maintenance, Keenesburg, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

David A. Young, working foreman, Construction, Materials Distribution Center, Henderson, Colo., retired on April 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

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Minneapolis, MN 55401
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XTRA
Published by Xcel Energy
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Design: Steve Berry

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