

XTRA

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OUTBOUND CALLING:

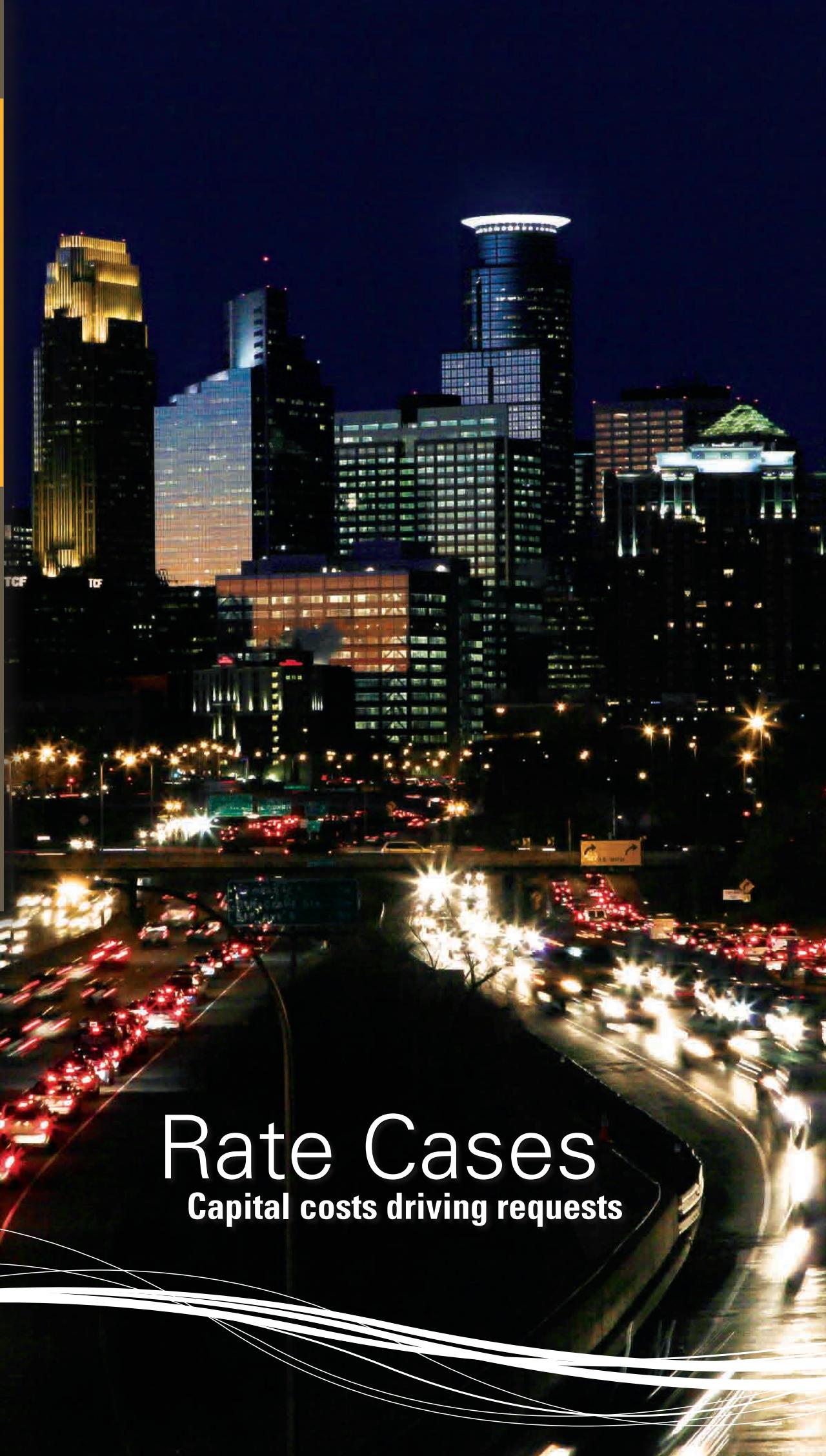
In-house effort keeping customers updated and informed

FORECASTING:

Wind forecasting system moving forward and saving millions

POWERING COMMUNITIES:

Pilot program using new social-media outreach



Rate Cases

Capital costs driving requests

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Downtown Minneapolis is lit up with lights, be they on streets or buildings. The company, of course, helps power many of those lights, but it takes up-to-date infrastructure to keep everything running smoothly. And for the utility industry, that means rate cases to determine how to fund the business. For more information, please see story on page 10.



A company crew at work on the East Coast

East Coast sends thanks to crews for Hurricane Sandy help

Dear Xcel Energy:

My husband and I live in Mt. Arlington, N.J. After Hurricane Sandy came through our state, like so many others, we were without power for nine long, cold and dark days.

It was some of your guys – a LONG way from home – who finally got us “back on the grid” once again. Although we personally thanked them, please extend our thanks once again to the awesome team that took time away from their own families to help ours.

We here in New Jersey appreciate your efforts more than we can ever express! You rock!

—Sandi and Craig Scranton, Mt. Arlington, N.J.

Dear Xcel Energy:

I want to thank the crew that restored power to my home in Plainview, N.Y., on Long Island. And not once, but twice.

My family had no power for eight days after Sandy as a result of a downed wire. The crew from Xcel Energy came and worked in the cold to restore our power. They were unbelievably kind to my children and were encouraging to me.

Two days later, the nor'easter storm hit and we lost power again. The next day, the same crew came and rescued us from the cold again! I am so grateful for these hard-working men, who left their families to help strangers across the country.

—Meredith Schechter Kule, Plainview, N.Y.

Dear Xcel Energy:

We just experienced the ravages of Hurricane Sandy and a nor'easter storm a few days later here in Long Island, N.Y. We had no power for 11 days, temperature in the 30s, with downed trees and utility poles adding to the problems.

We met the great guys from Xcel Energy, who worked tirelessly here in Plainview until we were back up. Can't thank them enough.

—Irv Cuttler, Plainview, N.Y.

Dear Xcel Energy:

I just passed two dozen or so of your line trucks with Colorado plates on them in Columbus, Ohio. They were westbound on Interstate 70, and I assume they were returning home after helping restore power to hurricane victims on the East Coast.

A big thank you to all of the line workers, who were away from their families while helping other families rebuild. They truly are the backbone of America.

—Joe Wilson

Dear Xcel Energy:

I would like to express our gratitude for the crews from your company that have been here on Long Island helping restore power. They came to work here and were greeted with a nor'easter to add to the task!

But they kept on working. The men I spoke to here in Head of the Harbor were great. They explained the time-frame that they expected to have the power back, and that was a big deal. After 11 days in the cold and dark, the information was most welcome and accurate. Thanks again.

—Kate Dowling, St James, N.Y.

Dear Xcel Energy:

I am sending you this email from my home computer, which is a big deal for me because for the past 13 days, I have been without power. I live in Smithtown, N.Y. (on Long Island), and yesterday, a great group of guys from Xcel Energy came to our neighborhood and restored our electricity.

I can't thank you enough for sending crews to Long Island after Hurricane Sandy. We truly appreciate your help in our restoration process.

—Jennifer Murray, Smithtown, N.Y.



OUTBOUND CALLING

Proactive in-house phone system helps keep customers informed

When the lights go out, it's important not to keep people in the dark.

To that end, an in-house automated-calling system is helping the company to quickly and efficiently reach out to customers and communicate vital information.

The in-house system also is proving a big help in many other situations related to Xcel Energy activities, such as tree trimming, meter reading and various planned repair work.

"The internal-dialing system allows us to be proactive in our communication with our customers," said Logan Griedl, an analyst with Customer Care Resource Management. "We can contact customers in anticipation of their questions and concerns."

For example, if a customer is experiencing frequent outages, the automated system can be used to contact them and let them know that the company is aware of the problem and working on it.

"Also, if there's a gas outage and there are a lot of Xcel Energy trucks working outside customers' homes, we can contact them prior to their questions about what's going on," he explained. "We also can use the system to communicate to

our customers about other issues such as scheduled visits by company crews concerning malfunctioning meters or other issues."

Prior to automated dialing, Xcel Energy typically used mailings to communicate with customers. The company then began using an outside vendor for its outbound telephone calls – the preferred method to contact customers in urgent situations or when little turn-around time is available.

However, last year, the company transitioned that work to an in-house dialing system to communicate with its customers.

One of the main advantages of the new system is the cost savings and process ownership. To date this year, Xcel Energy has used the automated-calling system to successfully contact nearly 600,000 customers. This puts the dialer on-track to save about \$80,000 by the end of 2012.

There also are additional cost savings due to the increased efficiency of the process of generating and initiating a communications campaign with the new internal dialer, Griedl added. Previously, for example, information had to be entered each time for each specific campaign.

The new system, however, uses specially tailored template formats that allow variables to be adjusted quickly. That

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I've heard various reports of customers expressing their gratitude for being kept in the loop and well-informed about outages or work being done in their area.

I // I

NEWS BRIEFS



Logan Griedl

means that similar or standardized messages can be adjusted in short order concerning data such as dates and locations, and then sent out.

In addition, the in-house automated calling system can generate a campaign in minutes.

"If all of the required information is provided to us in the correct format during normal business hours, we are able to generate a campaign and initiate calling within 30 minutes to an hour," Griedl said. "And our new dialer can then start making roughly 4,000 call attempts per hour.

"It's a big change," he added. "Previously, we were doing this work via postcards and letters and then used a third-party vendor to contact customers. Now, we are letting people know when there is going to be an outage or tree trimming in their area using an efficient in-house and low-cost dialer."

Customer response to the proactive calls to keep them informed about outages has been positive, Griedl said.

"I've heard various reports of customers expressing their gratitude for being kept in the loop and well-informed about outages or work being done in their area," he said.

The dialing system, in addition to making phone calls, also allows for the automated generation and sending of emails in campaigns. And its capabilities will further be enhanced in the near future.

"In the future, we look forward to bringing text-message functionality into the system for various campaigns," he said. "And other long-term enhancements will involve various types of prompting or the ability to convert text-to-speech in campaigns."

"This would allow the system to greet the caller by the name on the account," he added. "We will continue working to ensure that we are getting the value we expected from this new system."

"We are now finding new opportunities to use the dialer and plan to keep moving forward with it to provide more and more benefits to the company and our customers."

More information about the effort can be found on XpressNet. From the home page, look under the "Our Company" tab, then "Business Profiles," "Customer Care," and "Outbound Call Campaigns." ☐

Xcel Energy continues to be recognized for socially responsible business practices

Xcel Energy has earned membership again in two prominent international financial, corporate social responsibility indices.

The company has been named to the 2012-2013 Dow Jones Sustainability Index North America. The index tracks the performance of the top 20 percent of the 600 largest Canadian and U.S. companies in the Dow Jones Global Total Stock Market Index that are considered best in class for sustainability. The annual index assessment includes a review of more than 100 economic, environmental and social metrics.

"This recognition validates that we are striking the right balance in providing our communities with clean, reliable and affordable energy," said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. "Xcel Energy's corporate responsibility centers on maintaining cost-competitive energy rates for customers as we position our operations for the future preparing our workforce, improving our system, deploying new technologies, and reducing our environmental and regulatory risks."

"We work closely with a number of stakeholders that represent diverse interests as we make important, long-term decisions," he added.

This is the sixth year Xcel Energy has made the Dow Jones Sustainability Index North America. The company is rated highly through the assessment for corporate governance, customer relationship management, climate strategy, environmental policy/management, scorecard/measurement system, managing water-related risks and stakeholder engagement.

In addition, Xcel Energy is one of 53 companies selected for the Carbon Disclosure Leadership Index within the S&P 500. The index highlights companies that display a strong approach to information disclosure regarding climate change and is part of the Carbon Disclosure Project's annual S&P 500 report.

According to the organization, inclusion on the index indicates good internal data management and understanding of climate-change related issues. The company has been included in the leadership index for five consecutive years.

The Carbon Disclosure Project is a nonprofit organization that holds the world's largest database of climate-change and water information, representing 655 institutional investors with \$78 trillion in assets. Xcel Energy's corporate social responsibility practices and performance are outlined in its annual corporate responsibility report, available online at xcelenergy.com/corporate-responsibility.

Wind-forecast service saving money and moving forward

Savings top \$19 million, including \$5 million to date in 2012

Xcel Energy recently completed its first full year of operational deployment of WindWX – one of the most advanced wind-production forecasting systems in the world – and the savings to the company continue to add up.

This marked the latest stage in a multiyear R&D project to develop the core technology, which involved Xcel Energy, the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and Global Weather Corp. (GWC). In this stage, Xcel Energy has contracted with GWC, an affiliate company of NCAR, to host and maintain the system.

By using the new technology, Xcel Energy estimates it has

saved more than \$19 million total, including about \$5 million thus far in 2012. The company also has reduced its forecasting error rate by 30 percent since 2009, said John Welch, director of Power Operations.

The result of the project is a new global standard for accuracy in wind-prediction capability. The prediction model, marketed by GWC as WindWX, should enable other utilities to more reliably and cost-effectively integrate wind power.

Xcel Energy will receive royalties from the sale of WindWX, and the funds will be used to pay for hosting services and for further R&D on the forecasting system.

GWC is now working with a number of utilities to consider



providing the forecasting service on a wider scale. GWC then will have the opportunity to continue fine-tuning the system and spreading out the ongoing R&D costs.

Through the ongoing work of GWC, forecasts for a 168-hour period are provided every 15 minutes across Xcel Energy's entire service territory – from the hills of western Minnesota to the plains of eastern Colorado to the flat expanses of the Texas Panhandle.

The WindWX system uses real-time, turbine-level operating data and applies sophisticated algorithms to forecast the amount of wind power that will be produced. The forecasts, now available worldwide, are designed to help utilities make better commitment and dispatch decisions, including opportunities to power down less-efficient power plants when sufficient winds are forecasted to help meet customer electric demands.

This year, Xcel Energy is adding another 1,000 megawatts of wind energy to its system. And GWC will be using the forecasting system at these facilities as the company continues to add to its wind-power portfolio.

"Wind power is expected to represent at least 20 percent of the energy we provide in various parts of our service territory in 2013. Our goal is 30 percent renewable energy by 2020 in parts of the service territory," Welch said. "These high-accuracy forecasts are critical to a cost-effective means of achieving this goal."

In fact, in the early morning hours of April 15, 2012, Xcel Energy's system in Colorado reached a significant milestone when it served 56.7 percent of its load with wind energy. While this peak was for one hour only and did not necessarily involve the wind-forecasting system, it does show the impact that wind power can now have on the system and its production potential at certain times.

"Wind-power production is difficult to forecast due to its variability, and inaccurate forecasts are costly," said Drake Bartlett, senior trading analyst with Power Operations. "This precise wind-power forecasting service has significantly reduced our forecast error, allowing us to better determine

when to turn up or turn down coal- and natural gas-fired power plants.

"This in turn saves customers millions of dollars in fuel costs and more efficiently utilizes fossil fuels," he added. "We now have consistently better information to make critical dispatch and trading decisions."

The idea of turning off a reliable, base-load power plant for a weekend, in favor of a difficult-to-predict source of energy such as wind power would have been unthinkable just a couple of years ago, Bartlett said.

Forecasting wind at turbine sites is challenging because landscape features such as hills and trees can reshape wind speeds and directions, and cause turbulence in ways that can greatly influence the amount of energy produced, he said. In addition, most forecasting models are designed to generate information about winds near ground level rather than at 200 to 300 feet, which is where Xcel Energy's turbine hubs are typically located.

The R&D effort now is turning its attention to shorter forecasts. Currently, the focus is on day-ahead forecasts, he said, and that has gone well. However, future work will look at improving short-term forecasting, meaning time frames as tight as four hours ahead.

"We hope to play a part in ensuring that this model remains as a state-of-the-art system, and that we continue to advance the science," Welch said. "We've made significant headway in reducing wind-forecasting errors and lowering customer costs, but want to keep pushing and continue our efforts."

"We will continue to enhance and refine this model," he said. "It's made a tremendous impact on savings to our customers and in improving our system reliability."

"Wind is challenging because of the impacts it can have on our operations due to its intermittency," Welch added. "Using this system is proving to be a key tool in continuing to build a diverse and sustainable portfolio at Xcel Energy." **x**





POWERING YOUR COMMUNITY

Social-media efforts put to use at local level in new effort

Xcel Energy's social media efforts are at work at a local level, working with individual communities as part of a new program in Minnesota.

In a coordinated effort to strengthen relationships and partnerships with its communities, the company has begun a pilot program called "Powering Your Community" (PYC) in Woodbury and Eden Prairie – both in the Greater Twin Cities area.

The company is engaging residents, businesses, nonprofits and community leaders in a variety of ways to enhance ongoing partnerships and learn how the company can provide greater value going forward, said Al Krug, director of Customer and Community Affairs.

"We're spreading the word about our energy-management programs and other service options, plus supporting local nonprofits," he said. "We also expect to learn more about how we can better serve our communities through this pilot."

Part of the effort involves using social media to create better working relationships and engage customers through specifically targeted messaging to individual communities, said Tim Laughlin, manager of Social Media.

For example, the company recently began posting Woodbury-specific messages on its Minnesota Facebook page. These posts were relevant to Woodbury residents and supported the company's local PYC events. Only Woodbury residents had access to the posts.

"We also contacted the Facebook administrators of several local pages, including the Woodbury Bulletin, Woodbury Patch, the City of Woodbury and the Woodbury Chamber of Commerce, to help us with our efforts," he said. "These requests were needed because we are not allowed to post on these pages due to their administrative control settings."

"All agreed to not only help us promote the news of our PYC effort, but also to help boost our efforts through re-posts and adding pertinent links on their pages."

One Facebook post involved the annual Woodbury Days celebration. It read: "Woodbury Days are just two weeks away! While you're there, be sure to stop by the Xcel Energy booth and see how you can benefit from our energy efficiency rebate programs." In addition, an email campaign asked customers to submit questions about the company, as well as offer their comments and any other feedback.

"We are using a global tool and making it local," Laughlin said. "It's our first attempt to target smaller groups via social media, and it is working well."

The effort is also leading to ongoing partnerships with local partners, he added, including the chamber of commerce, newspapers and other community groups and businesses.

Beyond social media, the pilot program also encourages employees to become involved in their communities by participating in local chambers and volunteer events. One recent event involved a Habitat for Humanity project in Woodbury.

Xcel Energy®

POWERING YOUR COMMUNITY: WOODBURY

Because we are literally connected to the communities we serve, Xcel Energy works hard to ensure those communities are strong and healthy. You can count on us to deliver safe, reliable energy at a competitive price and in an environmentally responsible way. We give customers options to save energy and money and work with communities on economic development and local initiatives. And we support nonprofits through the Xcel Energy Foundation and the volunteer time and energy of our employees.

Powering Your Community is a new outreach effort to engage customers in a conversation and awareness about important energy issues facing their community. Over the coming months, we will be meeting with local customers, community, business and nonprofit leaders to discuss ways we can enhance and strengthen our ongoing partnerships and provide a high level of service. We will also be providing additional information on our full suite of energy efficiency, renewable energy, billing and payment programs and community building efforts through the Xcel Energy Foundation.

Customer Value
Providing energy at a competitive price is good for both our customers and the communities in which we live and serve. It boosts local economies, enabling businesses to thrive and keeps communities strong. Many of the investments we make help create jobs and contribute to local tax revenues. Even as we continue to modernize our infrastructure and bring more renewable energy onto our system, we have managed to keep rates reasonable. Our electricity rates have been and remain below the national average.

Managing Consumption Through Energy Efficiency Programs
Energy efficiency is a cornerstone of our clean energy strategy. Today, we help customers manage their energy consumption through one of the most ambitious energy saving program portfolios in the United States. We have dozens of options for customers to give them better control over their energy consumption in both business and residential settings. Our programs and rebates can help identify energy savings and purchase the most efficient equipment to keep energy consumption as low as possible. A typical residential customer who takes advantage of all the programs we have to offer can save \$500+ a year after year. The end result is customers save money and we avoid emissions and the need to purchase or produce additional power.

Infrastructure Investments Providing Long-Term Value
To improve the production, delivery and reliability of the energy we provide customers, we plan to invest an average of \$1 billion per year over the next five years in our Upper Midwest system. These proactive investments offer value by ensuring we can provide safe, reliable and clean energy at a competitive price for years to come. We continue to work on lowering operating costs by refining and standardizing processes to boost productivity and performance across the company.

Economic Development Builds Communities
Xcel Energy works closely with cities and local economic development agencies to attract, retain and expand business in its service area. We offer confidential assistance to new, relocating and expanding firms and will provide detailed information on energy capacity, energy efficiency programs, equipment rebates and our comprehensive Energy Design Assistance program.



Several years ago, the city of Woodbury set goals to be a sustainable community, including a focus on energy conservation.

"We selected Woodbury as one of our first cities for this initiative because we share common interests in energy conservation," Krug said. "Powering Your Community is a more organized approach to outreach, and the company is testing this approach by focusing on these two communities."

"Woodbury and Eden Prairie are the right size, growing and make a good fit," he added. "Eden Prairie has a big transmission project in the southwest corridor, and Woodbury also has some projects in the works."

In the pilot, Xcel Energy is trying a number of different ways to reach customers and deliver energy-efficiency messages, Krug said.

"We're doing a lot more with local media, placing articles on specific activities going on in these areas and investments we're making in the communities," he said. "We're also letting customers know how they can access our energy-efficiency programs, what we're sponsoring in their communities and how they can participate in local events."

In the past, the delivery of various company stakeholder outreach efforts – by Marketing, Community Relations, Operations, Advertising, Account Management and the Foundation – had been more independent.

"We have many excellent programs involving various company groups, and we want to leverage each other's strengths," Krug said. "Our opportunity here is to leverage existing efforts even more to create a tightly targeted and focused outreach initiative with coordinated messaging in a defined community."

"In a nutshell, we're demonstrating our value in the community and trying to make life easier for customers," he said. "We're investing for the future, keeping rates affordable and service reliable, and demonstrating our presence – showing that we truly are part of the community." **x**

HELPING HANDS

Employees from the Newport and Faribault service centers recently volunteered at the Habitat for Humanity Garden Gate project in Woodbury, Minn. This volunteer activity was coordinated as part of the Powering Your Community initiative. About a dozen volunteers spent the day constructing four townhomes. Pictured on page eight is Jason Axelrod, lineman; and at top above is Jake Miller, electric designer; while above is Troy Nodes, electric designer.



Rate cases

Like them or not, rate cases are a fixture of the regulated utility industry. They are the way Xcel Energy earns its profits, along with sales growth.

However, due to economic conditions in recent years, sales growth at the company has been slow to nonexistent. Tie that with an infrastructure that needs updating, and you have a real need for rate cases.

"We want to be sure to take care of our customers," said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. "Most of our infrastructure was built in the 1960s and needs to be updated."

In the coming months, rate cases will be filed throughout the company's service territories as upgrades and invest-

ments continue in transmission, distribution and generation, he said. NSP-Minnesota already has begun that process with a \$285 million rate request last month, in which investments in nuclear plants and the electric grid are the main drivers. And SPS in Texas recently followed suit with a \$90 million request.

All told, the company will be asking for about \$500 million in various rate requests in the coming year.

"Our true mission is to provide safe, clean, reliable power to our customers and to do it at a competitive price," Fowke said. "We have worked hard over the years to keep our rates low and have done so by improving processes and



managing costs.

"Nonetheless, every year we make ongoing and significant capital investments in the infrastructure of our system to ensure reliable operations for our customers," he added. Those annual investments have grown from about \$1 billion a year at the turn of the century to \$2.7 billion a year. A total of \$13.4 billion of investment is needed across the company's service territory over the next five years.

In addition, over the past three years, the company has invested \$8 billion in its system. That included work at Minnesota's Monticello Nuclear Generating Station, Colorado's Clean Air-Clean Jobs effort and the construction of a new

unit at Jones Generating Station in Texas.

"That's a big step up, and it's a big step up because we've been preparing for upcoming environmental challenges and addressing our aging infrastructure," Fowke said. "And we need to continue to do that."

The U.S. electric grid is not dissimilar from roads and bridges in that much of it was built after World War II. From 1950 to 1970, population in the company's service territory grew by almost 40 percent, providing sales growth to support the building of the current electric grid.

"When you're keeping up with growth like that, sales are offsetting the cost of that extra investment and it works

out well," Fowke said. "You don't have to go in for as many rate cases."

However, from 1970 to 2010 – a period of 40 years – that population growth slowed to a total of just 15 percent. And the last five years also have been tied to slow sales growth, he said. Due to these factors, the company plans to systematically address the infrastructure issue.

"As we address the aging infrastructure, we're not going to have the great sales growth of the 50s and 60s to offset it," Fowke said. "If we tried to replace all of it tomorrow, we estimate it would be four or times more expensive than what we have on the books today."

Thankfully, the percentage of disposable income that customers pay for their utility bills has not changed much since the 60s. For instance, an iPad uses only a \$1.50 worth of electricity a year, and new air-conditioning units continue to use less and less electricity.

"It's a different electric product that we use today – it's cleaner, safer and more reliable," he said. "We're needing it more than ever, yet it's not as flashy as a smartphone. But without it, we don't have our smartphones."

"So look for a series of rate cases over the next five years," he said, "as we get our infrastructure ready and prepared for the next generation of electric and gas users."

Even with these rates cases, however, Xcel Energy customers continue to pay lower rates than the national average. And in the company's service territory in Texas and New Mexico, customers pay some of the lowest rates in the country.

In addition, as part of the rate-case process, prices will be reset to reflect current usage levels, which for instance

are 4 percent lower than when rates last were set in Minnesota. This change primarily is due to the recession's lingering effects and also to the loss of several major customers that no longer help pay for the cost of producing and delivering electricity.

This change is not because of customers' great success with the company's conservation programs. By conserving energy, customers helped Xcel Energy avoid building nine power plants that – had they been built – would have caused rates to be higher than they are today. Most importantly, conservation programs have helped customers manage their bills while enjoying the benefits and comfort of reliable electric service.

"We do understand the impact of these proposed increases on our customers, and we offer an extensive suite of programs to help them manage and decrease their energy needs," Fowke said. "While all customers contribute to the costs of keeping our system safe and reliable, they can reduce their individual costs by participating in these energy-efficiency programs."

"Combined, these efforts help us strike a reasonable balance between the need to invest in our system and the need to ensure competitive rates and bills," he added. "We look forward to working through these proceedings with our stakeholders to gain the relief we need while still providing our customers reliable and affordable service."

For more information on rate cases, including frequently asked questions that may be helpful when talking with neighbors and friends, please visit the company's website at xcelenergy.com. **X**



The Basics of Rate Cases

In terms of rate-case basics, public utilities commissions (PUCs) in each state must approve the amount Xcel Energy charges customers for producing and delivering their natural gas and electricity. In order for these base rates to be changed, the company must go before the PUCs and make formal requests – or rate cases.

After a rate case has been filed, a commission reviews the case and conducts public hearings to discuss the merits of the request. The entire rate-case process, from start to finish, generally takes about a year.

Rate Case Video

To see a video about the process behind a rate case, scan this code with a smartphone (using a free app) or search under "XcelEnergyVideo" on YouTube.com.



Safe At Home

Customer Care employee receives national award

Patti Jo Kewatt recently received an honor for her work on a Minnesota program that protects individuals who are being harassed, threatened or stalked, or whose personal safety is at risk in some way.

At a ceremony in St. Paul, Secretary of State Mark Ritchie presented Kewatt with the National Association of Secretaries of State Medallion Award.

When Kewatt worked in Customer Care's Personal Accounts Department, she managed all of the company's interactions with customers that are part of the Minnesota Safe At Home Program. At Xcel Energy, the identity of those customers participating in this program is protected in the company's billing system and all transactions occur through a secure process.

Secretary Ritchie thanked Kewatt, a specialist in Quality Assurance, for her critical work with this program and her dedication to those most in need. Pat Boland, manager of Customer Policy and Assistance, also spoke at the ceremony and expressed appreciation for the collaborative work between the Secretary of State's office and Xcel Energy.

As Xcel Energy's liaison with the state, Kewatt administered the program within the company, talking with customers in the program and working with them on their Xcel Energy accounts. She also provided counseling.

"This was a very satisfying assignment," Kewatt said. "These customers called and they were scared. They didn't trust anyone or want to give out any information. They were petrified."





In explaining Xcel Energy's part of the program to them and how she would help them help themselves, Kewatt said she managed to get most of these worried customers to open up and relax. She even had a few customers who would call to talk with her on regular basis.

"Because of my calm demeanor and how I explained every procedure to keep them safe, they felt good about Xcel Energy," Kewatt said. "Of course, we maintain the confidentiality of all customers and their information. But I knew I was doing something that really counted by going the extra mile for those customers who felt threatened."

Boland and Dan Pfeiffer, when he was a Government Affairs manager in Minnesota, worked with the Secretary of State's office on the wording of the Safe At Home legislation – "which is now working out quite well for some of our customers," Boland said.

"These customers live in fear of someone every day, and this program helps provide a certain level of protection," Boland said. "Every good program, however, must have very dedicated people behind it, and Patti Jo certainly has filled that role."

Also attending the awards ceremony were Andy Hawkins, Personal Accounts Representative supervisor; Joy Langteau, Kewatt's current supervisor in Quality Assurance; and members of Kewatt's family.

In large part, Minnesota's "Safe At Home" model has been adopted in Colorado and is called the Account Confidentiality Program, Boland said. And Pfeiffer is now director of Regional Governmental Affairs in Colorado.

Safe At Home involves a state collaboration with local victim service providers to help survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking – or others who fear for their safety – establish a confidential address.

The intent of Safe At Home is to allow its participants to go about their lives, interacting with public and private enti-

ties – like Xcel Energy – without leaving traces of where they can typically be located, such as their residential address, a school address or an employment address, in an attempt to keep their aggressors from locating them.

The Safe At Home program of the Minnesota Secretary of State is authorized to enroll qualified individuals and provide them with a substitute address for their use in virtually all government, business and personal transactions.

Safe At Home can help keep a customer's location confidential, give the customer a substitute address to which mail can be sent, forward mail at no extra cost, assist a customer in voting, or help them receive legal documents.

Program participants who want to establish service with Xcel Energy must do so through the Personal Accounts Department (PAR), which handles the accounts of all Safe at Home participants. Other than reporting outages or emergencies, Safe at Home participants may call the PAR department to have questions answered, establish new accounts, make account changes and express concerns.

Kewatt now is working a new assignment in Customer Care, and Shelly Brown is Xcel Energy's Safe At Home liaison. ☒

SAFE AT HOME

Pictured above at the Safe at Home award ceremony in St. Paul, Minn., is (left to right) Andrew Hawkins, supervisor in Personal Accounts North; Patrick Boland, manager of Customer Policy and Assistance; Patti Jo Kewatt, specialist in Quality Assurance; and Mark Ritchie, Minnesota Secretary of State.

NEWS BRIEF

New Mexico regulators approve backup generation plant for Tucumcari

The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission recently voted to approve Xcel Energy's new power generating facility in Tucumcari, N.M.

The facility will be known as the Quay County Generating Station and will comprise a single simple-cycle combustion turbine powered by diesel fuel. Its primary purpose is to provide 22 megawatts of standby electricity for the city of Tucumcari, which is served by a single transmission feed.

"The new plant will be a continuation of Xcel Energy's service and reliability to our communities, providing the city of Tucumcari with a practical and efficient backup plan," said Alice Jackson, director of Regulatory Administration, Amarillo.

The new generating plant will be used as a backup only in the case of an extended outage or power shortage, said David Essex, manager of Community and Economic Development, Clovis, N.M.

"We are grateful for the support of city and county leaders who have worked with us on this project," he said.

Xcel Energy acquired the electric distribution system that serves Tucumcari in 1980, along with a small diesel-fueled power plant that served the city's needs until it reached the end of its useful life. The plant was decommissioned last year and dismantled.

Xcel Energy determined that an alternative generating system to replace the old plant would be the most cost-effective way to provide backup services to Tucumcari. The company plans to spend \$15.8 million on the project, located near the north Tucumcari Campbell Substation.

A gas turbine generator now in service at River-view Generating Station near Borger, Texas, will be relocated to the new facility. Xcel Energy plans to have the Quay County plant operational by the summer of 2013.

Limon wind farms come online in Colorado

Xcel Energy representatives, along with other energy industry leaders, ranchers and federal, state and local officials recently celebrated the completion of Colorado's newest wind farms, Limon I and II Wind Energy Centers, about 90 miles southeast of Denver.

"These projects will bring the amount of wind on our Colorado system to 2,200 megawatts," David Eves, president and CEO of PSCo. "They offer some of the lowest-priced wind energy we've seen. And they demonstrate that renewable energy can compete on an economic basis with more traditional forms of generation.

"They also can help us meet the state's Renew-

able Energy Standard at a very reasonable cost to our customers," he added.

The twin 200-megawatt projects are both owned and operated by affiliates of NextERA Energy Resources, with Xcel Energy purchasing all the power under long-term contracts.

Other dignitaries who spoke at the event included Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper and U.S. Rep. Cory Gardner, who serves the district in which the wind farms are located.

Each of the Limon projects consists of 125 General Electric 1.6-megawatt wind turbines spread across more than 55,000 acres in Arapahoe, Elbert and Lincoln counties in Colorado. Construction began in 2012 and employed more than 300 workers. Ongoing operations will employ about 17 full-time employees.

Jim Lynch named Prairie Island site vice president

Jim Lynch, vice president of Assistance for the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO), has been named site vice president at Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, near Red Wing, Minn.

"We are fortunate to have secured Jim from INPO to serve as Prairie Island's top executive," said Tim O'Connor, acting chief nuclear officer. "Jim's depth of experience will be instrumental in supplementing Prairie Island's existing management team and creating a sustainable and effective site leadership team that

will position the site to pursue performance excellence."

At INPO since 1988, Lynch has been responsible for assistance, the senior representative program, and organizational and human performance. He was elected INPO vice president in August 2010. His previous positions include director of corporate evaluations and deputy director of organizational effectiveness.

INPO, sponsored by the commercial nuclear industry, is an independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the highest levels of safety and reliability in the operation of commercial nuclear power plants.

MYTHILI CHAGANTI



From a young age, engineering the goal for Minnesota employee

It's one of the most common questions that adults pose to youngsters: "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

As kids, if we were even able to answer, we likely ended up doing something different in the end. Not so with Mythili Chaganti.

At a young age she had a clear idea of what she wanted to do in her life. And so she began walking a straight and deliberate path toward the goal of being an electrical engineer.

Today, Chaganti has realized that goal – and with notable success. Chaganti is an electrical engineer for Xcel Energy and is also active and well-recognized in related professional associations and volunteer work.

Born in India to a father who is a physician and a mother who worked as school principal, Chaganti was encouraged academically and to pursue a career.

"I had always wanted to be an engineer. My uncles were engineers and graduates from the local college," she said. "A field trip in my junior year of college to the local utility's generation plant enforced my desire to work for a utility and I subsequently chose the Power Engineering field as my focus."

And it's been a good fit for me."

Chaganti joined Xcel Energy in 2004 and currently is a senior specialty engineer in Substation Engineering and Design in Minneapolis. And when not working in her department, she often is involved in sharing her experience and expertise with others as a volunteer with the International Electrical and Electronic Engineers association (IEEE). She also is a chapter chair for the Twin Cities chapter, which won the "Outstanding Large Chapter Award" in 2010.

"I enjoy participating in activities that interest me, while at the same time expanding my knowledge and gaining valuable skills," she said. "Connecting with others in the profession and working towards the common goal of bringing a humanitarian aspect around work motivates me to volunteer with IEEE."

Her volunteer work with IEEE involves arranging technical meetings and doing educational outreach around issues related to energy generation and what it is like to be an electrical engineer. For the past three years, Chaganti has coordinated and organized substation tours for more than 1,100 local technical college students, university students, engineers from

other industries, as well as for internal employees. During the tours, she discusses the purpose and use of diverse substation equipment, and also focuses on safety issues.

"Most people take electricity for granted," she said. "I show the dedication commitment needed from an entire utility company to produce and deliver safe, reliable electricity to its customers".

"Many of the participants later say that they started observing substations in their communities after they have taken the tour and appreciate the value we bring even more," she added.

Chaganti also volunteers during National Engineers Week, visiting local middle schools to increase students' awareness of the engineering profession and how the work of engineers impacts their daily lives. She has participated every year since 2006.

"It is extremely rewarding to teach the next generation of kids the importance of science and math," she said. "I get invited back by the same teachers to talk to the students."

"The teachers tell me that it always helps to see working professionals talk about the benefits of excelling in math and science," she said. "It can have a great impact on students, and I'm proud to be able to inspire and motivate students that I talk to during that week."

Electrical engineering is not a profession that many wom-

en pursue, Chaganti noted, but in her community outreach she encourages students, and particularly young women, to explore that career option.

"It is true that there are not many women engineers in the power and energy fields," she said. "But if you work hard and have the technical qualifications, I believe you'll be rewarded irrespective of who you are."

"It has never occurred to me that I am different as a women engineer from other engineers in the industry," she added. "My goal as a woman and as an engineer is to try and engage as many young adults as possible through IEEE or mentoring. My hope is to close the gap and see many women professionals work in the power and energy industry in the future."

Chaganti's professional expertise and her passion for engineering recently were recognized by IEEE. Due to her exemplary work as chapter chair, she was chosen to chair the annual Minnesota Power Systems conference – becoming the first female engineer to hold that prestigious appointment.

"I have always believed that community building is extremely important," she said. "Growing up, I benefited from the many programs offered by my school and university."

"It is natural for me to give back to the community," she added. "I am a people person and love the company of others. My volunteer activities bring me closer to people and provide me with plenty of opportunities to make a difference." **x**



ENGINEER

At a young age, Mythili Chaganti had a clear idea of what she wanted to do in her life. And so she began walking a straight and deliberate path toward the goal of being an electrical engineer. Today, Chaganti is an electrical engineer for Xcel Energy, and she also is active and well recognized in related professional associations and volunteer work.

FRIENDS WE'LL MISS

J.G. Aljinovich

78, working trouble foreman, Electric Distribution Operations, Colorado, died on Oct. 25, 2012. He worked for PSCo from 1960 to 1994.

Steven W. Anderson

62, troubleman, Minneapolis Trouble, Chestnut Service Center, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Sept. 1, 2012. He worked for NSP from 1970 to 2006.

James E. Bagan

66, lead tapping mechanic, Gas Contractors, Rice Street Service Center, St Paul, Minn., died on Oct. 20, 2012. He worked for NSP from 1971 to 2003.

Nancy V. Goree

53, customer service representative, Customer Service, Colorado, died on Oct. 29, 2012. She worked for Xcel Energy from 1982 until 2012.

John K. Hughs

83, Texas, died on Nov. 1, 2012. He worked for SPS from 1959 to 1994.

Alvin J. Malecha

75, district troubelman, Keystone Division, Mankato, Minn., died on Oct. 23, 2012. He worked for NSP from 1959 to 1975.

Wayne C. Oetken

89, working foreman, Colorado, died on Aug. 8, 2012. He worked for PSCo from 1966 to 1986.

Sandra L. Purdham

64, senior secretary, died on Oct. 28, 2012. She worked for Xcel Energy from 1990 until 2012.

Maynard Rasmussen

89, order reader, Colorado, died on Oct. 27, 2012. He worked for PSCo from 1948 to 1986.

Donald C. Riepl

83, training specialist, Colorado, died on Oct. 26, 2012. He worked for PSCo from 1954 to 1986.

James C. Wojciak

73, electric project coordinator, Chestnut Service Center, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Oct. 3, 2012. He worked for NSP from 1962 to 1996.

RETIRING

Michael Bennallo

(mcbenallo@q.com), gas fitter, Gas Shop, Gateway Service Center, Aurora, Colo., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

David Bergerson

lineman, Overhead, St. Croix Falls, Wis., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Gary K. Bettger

order reader, Meter Reading, Denver, Colo., retires on Dec. 28, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 44 years.

Stephen Blair

(stevemargie@msn.com), lead gas fitter, Gas Shop, Mesa County Operations Center, Grand Junction, Colo., retires on Dec. 28, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Thomas A. Buck

mechanical technician, Maintenance, Riverside Plant, Minneapolis, Minn., retires on Dec. 28, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Noel Bungard

gas serviceman, Gas Shop, Kipling Service Center, Lakewood, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Frank Bunning

(frankbunning@msn.com), mechanic specialist, Maintenance, Cherokee Station, Denver, Colo., retired on Dec. 18, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Susan Clawson

meter reader, Mesa County Operations Center, Grand Junction, Colo., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. She worked for Xcel Energy for 30 years.

Dan Cook

technician specialist, System Protections, Golden, Colo., retired on Oct. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

David N. Coombe

lead fitter, Gas, Grand Junction, Colo., retires on Dec. 20, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Greg DiPaolo

(gregd2696@yahoo.com), foreman, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retired on Oct. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

Randy L. Edens

(RPEdens@yahoo.com), lead fitter serviceman, North Metro Gas Construction, Brighton Service Center, Brighton, Colo., retires on Dec. 27, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Mark A. Emore

lineman and working foreman, Electrical Distribution, Silverthorne, Colo., retired on Oct. 26, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 30 years.

William F. Falligan

shift supervisor, Energy Supply, Pawnee Station, Brush, Colo., retired on Nov. 26, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 40 years.

Willie Mae Fields

meter reader, Pueblo, Colo., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Peggy Fitzgerald

senior agent, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. She worked for Xcel Energy for 24 years.

Larry Garceau

planner, Design/Engineering, Mesa County Operations Center, Grand Junction, Colo., retired on Dec. 17, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 32 years.

Gary Hillsten

mechanic, Maintenance, Cherokee Generating Station, Denver, Colo., retired on Dec. 17, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 31 years.

PEOPLE

Robert E. Hines

working foreman, Substations, Lubbock, Texas, retires on Dec. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

T.J. Hutcheson

plant operator, Operations, Hayden Station, retires on Dec. 25, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 22 years.

Curtis D. King

lead insulator, Maintenance, Sherco Plant, Becker, Minn., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 26 years.

Ronald L. King

working foreman, Electric Line, Arvada Service Center, Arvada, Colo., retires on Dec. 28, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 31 years.

Geannie R. Larsen

senior associate, Electric Operations, Kipling Service Center, Lakewood, Colo., retired on Oct. 31, 2012. She worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

James Leary

electrical tech, Riverside Generating Plant, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 14, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Gary Lewis,

designer, Distribution Design, Mesa County Operations Center, Grand Junction, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Donald Newcome

valutman/cableman, Electric Underground, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retires on Dec. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 42 years.

Anthony J. Nuanez

working foreman, Electric Line, Boulder, Colo., retired on Nov. 29, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Ken Numoto

(*knumoto@comcast.net*), designer, Design and Layout, Denver, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 40 years.

Michael P. Larkin

electrician specialist, Hayden Station, Hayden, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 26 years.

Richard Radtke

senior plant process computer analyst, Technical Services, Sherco Plant, Becker, Minn., retired on Nov. 12, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 39 years.

Steve Roth

(*srothfam@msn.com*), manager, Distribution Design, Fort Collins/Greeley, Colo., retired on Oct. 31, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Daniel D. Schmidt

plant specialist, Maintenance, Comanche Generating Station, Pueblo, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Michael Shields

(*mtswww@aol.com*), electric meter foreman, Electric Meter Dept., Southwest Service Center, Lakewood, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 40 years.

Christopher V. Thompson

electric system operator, Electric Distribution, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retired on Nov. 25, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 26 years.

Lyman (Bud) Van Horn

(*golfvanhorn@yahoo.com*), storekeeper, Logistics, Valmont Station, Boulder, Colo., retired on Nov. 30, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 32 years.

Fred V. Vigil

plant specialist A., Operations, Comanche Generating Station, Pueblo, Colo., retired on Dec. 1, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 36 years.

Ron Witman

field operator, Eastern High Pressure Gas, Kipling Service Center, Lakewood, Colo., retired on Dec. 17, 2012. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Vannie Scott

analyst, C&I Billing, Centre Point, Roseville, Minn., received her Masters of Science degree in Information Technology Management from St. Mary's University of Minnesota, Oct. 14, 2012.

Joe Phillips

Substation Engineering and Design, Marquette Plaza, Minneapolis, Minn., received his Engineering-In-Training certification, May 1, 2012.

Matt Sarkinen

Substation Engineering and Design, Marquette Plaza, Minneapolis, Minn., received his Engineering-In-Training certification, May 1, 2012.

Paul Nyombi

System Protection Engineering, Marquette Plaza, Minneapolis, Minn., received his Engineering-In-Training certification, May 1, 2012.

Michael Lundy

Substation Engineering and Design, Marquette Plaza, Minneapolis, Minn., received his Engineering-In-Training certification, May 1, 2012.

Xtra retiree web portal available on xcelenergy.com

The latest issue of Xtra is posted each month on a webpage on the company's website at: xcelenergy.com/retirees.

Retirees and employees are invited to visit the page to view the latest issue, as well as a number of back issues of Xtra. Links on the page also provide access to various utility shareholder groups.



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