

Hiawatha CARE Project: Fact Sheet

Issue: Energy



Why is Energy Important?

Using renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal can reduce negative impacts of energy use. Using energy more efficiently can reduce the cost and environmental impact of heating, air-conditioning, and providing electricity.

In new construction, energy efficiency can be incorporated into a building's overall design. Older buildings can benefit through insulation, weatherization, and use of efficient appliances and heating and cooling systems.

The Energy Star program helps consumers look at energy use when purchasing appliances, electronics, and other products.

How Does Energy Affect Us Locally?

According to 2000 US Census data, 68% of Minnesota homes heat with natural gas, while 12% use electricity and 10% propane. Energy Information Administration data indicate 56% of the electricity in Minnesota comes from burning coal (2009).

Phillips and Longfellow contain a high proportion of older housing stock, which can lack insulation, efficient appliances and heating units, and efficient windows. Home heating can be costly for some older homes that were built before recent building standards.

Energy improvements that would save money and energy over the long term have high upfront costs and long payback periods. Weatherization of older homes offers a way to save money and natural resources.

Health Impacts

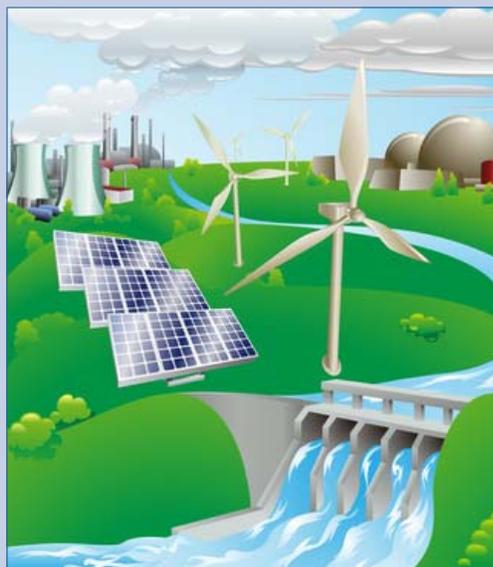
- Burning fossil fuels contributes to air pollution, which can result in shortness of breath, asthma attacks, heart attacks, strokes, congestive heart failure, worsened chronic lung disease such as emphysema and premature death

Environmental Impacts

- The coal used to make most of Minnesota's electricity releases carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury into the air.
- The natural gas used in heating, although cleaner than coal, releases about half the carbon dioxide and one-third the nitrogen oxides as coal.

Financial Impacts

- Inefficient homes have higher heating, air conditioning, water, and electricity bills.



Hiawatha CARE Project Partners

Alexander's Import Auto Repair

American Lung Association of Minnesota

Blue Construction

City of Minneapolis

East Phillips Improvement Coalition

Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota

Gardening Matters

Hennepin County

Hennepin - University Partnership

Little Earth of United Tribes

Longfellow Business Association

Longfellow Community Council

Minnehaha Communion Lutheran

Church & Longfellow Lutheran parishes

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Minnesota Department of Health

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Mississippi Watershed Management Org.

Preventing Harm Minnesota

St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church

US Environmental Protection Agency

Women's Environmental Institute

Hiawatha CARE Project - A project of Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works

What Can Individuals Do?

- Get a home energy audit done on your house to learn of ways to use less energy.
- Borrow a “power check meter” from a Hennepin County library to identify high-energy use appliances, identify potential cost savings, and identify devices that use a lot of energy when turned off.
- Save electricity by turning off lights and unplugging electronic devices.
- Use a programmable thermostat if you have forced air heat.
- Plant and maintain trees to reduce heating and cooling needs.
- Wash clothes in cold water.
- Adjust the thermostat – even a degree or two adds up!
- Purchase Energy Star appliances.
- Add insulation in attic and walls.

What Can the Community Do?

- Create community energy challenges or contests to become the most efficient home in the neighborhood.
- Take the Minnesota Energy Challenge www.mnenergychallenge.org
- Educate the community about energy efficient alternatives.

What Can the City, County, and State Do?

- Enact policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the Cool County Initiative, adopted by the Hennepin County Board to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050.
- Support loan and grant programs for energy-efficient home retrofits.

For More Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/nceh/publications/books/housing/cha13.htm

Energy Star, www.energystar.gov/

Environment and Human Health, Inc., www.ehhi.org/reports/leed/

Hennepin County, www.hennepin.us, search: Cool County

US Department of Energy, www.eere.energy.gov/

US Energy Information Administration, www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/st_profiles/minnesota.html

Photo © Christos Georghiou - Fotolia.com

Community Action of Minneapolis provides assistance with paying energy bills and weatherization. They offer grants for low-income renters and homeowners in Minneapolis. **(612) 335-5837** or www.campls.org/

What is the CARE Project?

The Hiawatha CARE Project is a new effort to address environmental toxins in western Longfellow and East Phillips. The project brings together two dozen business, community, government, and non-profit agencies in a community-

driven effort to identify, prioritize, and address environmental risks in the area.

The project was initiated in December 2010 when Hennepin County received a \$100,000 Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) award from the

US Environmental Protection Agency. The CARE program supports local collaborations to reduce toxins in the local community.

More Information:

www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com/care
612.348.9344.