



# Energy efficiency: the silent hero of clean energy

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While solar panels and windmills are the hallmark of the renewables sector, it's people who are the face of the energy efficiency sector in Minnesota. Energy efficiency employs more than 49,000 Minnesotans and makes up 86% of the clean energy jobs in our state. These jobs include workers manufacturing energy efficient windows and doors, or contractors whose building retrofits save people money with high-efficiency lighting and heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems.

Part of Clean Energy Economy MN's (CEEM) mission is to educate policymakers on clean energy and the benefits it provides to Minnesota's economy. That is why we teamed up with our partners at the Center for Energy and the Environment (CEE) to host an educational tour with Representative Dario Anselmo (R-49A) at Precision Gasket Company (PGC) located in his district of Edina.

The tour allowed us to help educate Rep. Anselmo on the cheapest form of clean energy -- energy efficiency. We focused our education on CIP, the Conservation Improvement Program that is Minnesota's most successful energy policy from the last 30 years. To date, CIP has helped save more than \$6 billion and helped utilities avoid building numerous new power generation plants.

The tour also gave Rep. Anselmo the opportunity to hear from a company in his district (PGC), as well as lighting installer Apadana Solar speak about PGC's efficiency project. They outlined which state policies made the project possible, which technologies were installed, and the savings PGC has realized because of it.

PGC is an engineering and manufacturing company and was chosen for this tour because they are a prime example of the benefits Minnesota's Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) provides through energy efficiency. At the end of the tour, PGC's CEO Steve Hanson showed us their facility, to see firsthand the energy efficient technology that was saving them thousands each year.

Because of CIP, PGC was able to utilize CEE's One Stop Efficiency Shop program. The One Stop Efficiency Shop is a full-service

rebate designed to address concerns small business owners face when choosing more efficient lighting and HVAC equipment. Thanks to this program, PGC has been able to generate more than \$198,000 in electric cost savings over the course of the energy efficiency project's lifetime.

Energy efficiency continues to provide jobs, cut energy costs and increase savings for businesses throughout Minnesota. For this reason, it is important that policymakers are made aware of how businesses in their district are benefitting from policies like CIP. These tours allow legislators to see the benefits of clean energy policies in person, hear directly from the businesses that benefit, and learn how they can help to continue clearing a pathway for clean energy to thrive.

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