

District Energy St. Paul Plans Elimination of Coal for Heating System

–For immediate release

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Saint Paul, MN (October 28, 2015) District Energy St. Paul, a local, non-profit utility, has begun plans to end its use of coal after the 2020-21 heating season. The transition from coal reduces the heating system's CO2 emissions by 27 percent or 21,000 tons. This is the equivalent of removing 4,400 cars from the road each year.

“The State of Minnesota is already a national leader in renewable energy and energy infrastructure, leveraging significant local resources such as wind and biomass to displace fossil fuels and maintain a diversified energy system,” says Bill Grant, Deputy Commissioner of Energy and Telecommunications for the Minnesota Department of Commerce. “Looking forward, district energy, combined heat and power, and

flexible energy infrastructure will be key to how we meet energy demands most efficiently and effectively.”

District Energy’s fuel transition is not mandated, but driven by efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase system resilience, and deliver a value proposition that is in line with customer demands. The transition is now possible because of changes in fuel and finance markets and the availability of alternative resources to help meet the critical heating demands of a Minnesota winter.

“It is now time to phase out these assets and use this opportunity to modernize and diversify energy sources,” says Ken Smith, CEO and President of District Energy St. Paul. “Cities are the largest contributor to energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. It is our responsibility as a community energy system to find innovative solutions that lessen our impact, improve local resilience, and help create a city prepared for the future. The elimination of coal is an important step in the evolution of our business, and we are already looking ahead to our next opportunity to save energy and reduce climate impacts.”

District Energy has a strong history of public-private partnerships, building its success from the support of customers, government, and the business and environmental community. These partnerships were key to advancing the system from entirely coal in 1983 to North America’s most integrated system.

“In the face of a changing climate, the City of Saint Paul relies on its service partners to continue improving their environmental performance and deliver the next great energy solutions that reduce our carbon footprint and make us more resilient to changes in our environment and our economy,” says Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. “District Energy continues to be a strong advocate for sustainable solutions and finding ways to move our City forward.”

The utility utilizes a flexible fuel approach, which has protected service reliability and buffered customers from volatile fuel markets. The utility has worked on a continuum to integrate efficient and renewable energy to reduce fossil fuel usage and greenhouse gas emissions. This started with a transition from steam to hot water in 1983 and more recently with the integration of waste heat from biomass-fired combined heat and power and North America’s largest solar hot water system. These efforts have already significantly reduced the utility’s coal use and provided hundreds of customers with the most sustainable heating system option available in the State of Minnesota. These efforts have pioneered diversification of the district energy industry and earned the utility global sustainability recognition.

District Energy is planning for additional diversification to incorporate greater efficiencies, emerging technologies, and more renewable energy sources. Primary opportunities include incorporation of additional waste heat from the combined heat and power system and waste heat capture from local waste

water (sewage) systems. District Energy will continue to advance its system through these renewable and efficient resources, while preserving the impressive history of rate stability and service reliability.

About District Energy St. Paul

District Energy St. Paul is a leader in community energy, providing Saint Paul with reliable service, stable rates, and sustainable heating and cooling services. As a mission-driven organization, District Energy has an ongoing commitment to advance its system through innovation, serve as environmental stewards, and to be a good community partner.

District Energy St. Paul currently heats nearly 200 buildings and 300 single-family homes and cools more than 100 buildings in downtown Saint Paul and adjacent areas. The customer base includes local and state government, arts, entertainment, hospitality, Fortune 500 companies, start-ups, and landmark small businesses that thrive with the support of District Energy's stable and reliable heating and cooling services.

For more information, visit [districtenergy.com](https://www.districtenergy.com).