

Commerce awards funding for 13 new CARD grants

Thirteen research and development grant projects that will ultimately help Minnesota consumers and businesses save energy, cut energy bills, and reduce carbon dioxide emissions were recently announced by the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources. The grants are funded by the [Conservation Applied Research and Development \(CARD\) Grant Program](#) and administered through the statewide Conservation Improvement Program.

The CARD Grant Program was created to help achieve the state energy conservation goal as established by the [Next Generation Energy Act](#) of 2007. The Act established an energy conservation policy “to achieve annual energy savings equal to 1.5 percent of annual retail energy sales of electricity and natural gas” directly through utility conservation improvement programs and indirectly through energy codes, education, market transformation programs, consumer behavioral changes, and more.

Projects for the 2017 cycle of general topic CARD grants were chosen from 35 full proposals (honed down from 110 initial ideas) submitted through a competitive grant process. They will evaluate residential heat pump clothes dryers, commercial advanced power strips, and multifamily condensing tankless water heaters; examine ways to improve the efficiency of residential stand-alone dehumidifiers and commercial boiler tune-ups; and investigate a wide range of other pertinent topics and approaches.

For example, the heat pump clothes dryer project will monitor a sample of dryers to assess the real-world energy savings and cost-effectiveness of this new technology in single-family residences. The study will also provide a better understanding of the consumer experience. Results will offer insight into the market potential for heat pump clothes dryers in Minnesota.

The CARD grant projects, totaling more than \$2.4 million, eventually aid utilities to create energy-saving programs for consumers and businesses as part of the state’s Conservation Improvement Program, which a [2015 study](#) (pdf) showed to have a strong positive economic impact on the state.

Grantees include a range of nonprofit and for-profit groups, many of which have years of experience working with utilities to help them achieve energy conservation goals. The grant funds are intended to benefit the State of Minnesota and Minnesota ratepayers specifically. All programs, products and services generated by the grants will be delivered to utility customers, end-users, and trade partners located in Minnesota.

The CARD grantees, their projects, and grant amounts include:

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

White Paper: Prepaid Electricity Plans as Energy Efficiency Programs in Minnesota: Potential Savings and Concerns

\$49,998

Center for Energy and Environment

Field Study of Stand-alone Dehumidification and Efficiency Opportunities in Minnesota Single-Family Homes

\$257,780

Center for Energy and Environment
Expanded Scope Commercial Boiler Tune-ups
\$250,960

Center for Energy and Environment
The Operation and Control of Lighting, Plug Loads, and other Power over Ethernet (PoE) Technologies
\$104,975

Center for Energy and Environment
White Paper: Is it Time to Reconsider Minnesota Cooling Loads?: The Diversity of Potential Residential Cooling Solutions and a Best Practices Guide
\$49,946

Center for Energy and Environment
White Paper: Pay-for-Performance: A Development Tool to Incentivize Ongoing Building Performance
\$49,334

Evergreen Economics, Inc.
White Paper: Future Emerging Technologies: Leveraging Public Research for Application in Minnesota
\$49,680

Gas Technology Institute
Demonstration of Packaged Central Condensing Tankless Water Heating Systems in Multifamily Buildings
\$334,667

Michaels Energy, Inc.
White Paper: The Electrified Frontier: Exploring Stakeholder Views on the Emerging Intersection of Electrification, Efficiency and De-carbonization
\$44,462

Seventhwave, Inc.
Field and Market Assessment of Heat Pump Clothes Dryers
\$376,598

Seventhwave, Inc.
Field Study of Tier 2 Advanced Power Strips
\$105,978

Synapse Energy Economics, Inc.
White Paper: Updating the Energy Efficiency Cost-effectiveness Framework in Minnesota
\$49,860

University of Minnesota
White Paper: Driving Wastewater Treatment Energy Efficiency through a Cohort Training and Implementation Plan
\$50,000

Two more CARD grants to address energy code compliance in Minnesota will be announced soon. More information on the CARD program is available on the [Commerce website](#). Questions can be directed to the Department of Commerce Energy Information Center at energy.info@state.mn.us or 651-539-1886 or 1-800-657-3710.