



Minnesota Power Offers Wind Power To Residential and Small Commercial Customers

(Duluth, MN)-Minnesota Power, a business unit of ALLETE, Inc. (NYSE: ALE), is providing customers with the opportunity to purchase electricity from renewable wind power. The company has received approval from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for its new wind power program for residential and small commercial customers, called WindSense. Minnesota Power is purchasing half the output of three new wind generators owned by Great River Energy at its Chandler Hills Wind Farm on the Buffalo Ridge in southwestern Minnesota.

Customers can subscribe to WindSense by completing a registration form, which will be included in Minnesota Power's customer newsletter or by calling the company at 1-800-228-4966. The newsletter will be included in billing statements, which are currently being mailed.

The cost to produce wind energy is higher than that of coal-fired or hydroelectric generation. As a result, electricity produced through the program will include a small surcharge of \$2.50 for every block of 100-kilowatt-hours purchased. Wind power will be sold in 100-kilowatt-hour blocks, up to a maximum of 20 blocks. For example, customers who use 700 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month (typical household use) and want to purchase wind power to meet all their electricity needs would pay \$17.50 more a month than their usual power bill. Customers must commit to their subscription level for at least one year, and will be able to continue monthly thereafter until they change their subscription or terminate it.

"Some of our customers have expressed interest in buying wind power even if it costs more," said Patrick Mullen, vice president-distribution operations and customer service. "We don't know how many customers will subscribe to WindSense, but we think it's important to offer a renewable energy choice. In addition, customer response to the program will help Minnesota Power determine if additional wind generation should be purchased."

It's not physically possible to direct electrons generated through the wind to individuals' meters. Wind power flows into the power grid, where it's mixed with electricity from all other regional sources. However, customers who subscribe to WindSense will financially support the growth of wind generation in the state.

Minnesota Power serves 144,000 customers in northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin with low-cost energy. ALLETE is a multi-services company with corporate headquarters in Duluth, Minnesota. Other ALLETE businesses include the second-largest wholesale automobile auction in North America; the leading provider of independent auto dealer inventory financing; the largest investor-owned water utilities in Florida and North Carolina; and significant real estate holdings in Florida.

Headquartered in Elk River, Minnesota, Great River Energy is a consumer-owned generation and transmission cooperative and Minnesota's second largest utility in terms of generating capacity. Great River Energy provides low-cost electrical energy and related services to its 29 member distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The statements contained in this release, and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.