



GREAT RIVER
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Big Lake facility recognized for energy efficient construction *Great River Energy building achieves LEED certification*

Big Lake, Minn. – Great River Energy’s Big Lake Service Center was recently awarded LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). LEED is the nationally accepted rating system for buildings that demonstrate energy efficiency and sustainability.

The 41,500-square-foot facility, which opened in May 2008, features several energy efficient features, including geothermal heating and cooling. In addition, 34 percent of building materials were recycled and 24 percent were manufactured locally.

LEED certification is awarded based on a point system; the Big Lake Service Center received 29 LEED points – three more than are needed to achieve LEED certification. A significant amount of the points were awarded in the “Optimize Energy Performance” category, largely as a result of efficient heating and cooling.

The facility uses a heat recovery system to recycle heat rather than exhaust it from the building. The geothermal system uses the relatively constant underground temperature to both heat and cool the space. The vehicle areas and perimeter office space are heated with in-floor radiant heat from the geothermal heat pump.

“The heat recovery system reduces the need to generate heat, said Great River Energy Facilities Manager Mark Lucas. “When we do need to heat or cool, the geothermal system operates very efficiently.”

The Big Lake Service Center serves as a home base for specialized equipment necessary for construction and maintenance to the electrical grid, such as cranes and bucket trucks. The facility allows all equipment to be stored in an easily accessible indoor structure. Also, because of its central location, the Big Lake Service Center will serve as a storage location for large equipment that travels all over the state.

Six full-time linemen are stationed out of the facility. In addition to the garage area, the facility also includes an office, shop material area and a large conference room to host meetings with technicians from across the state.

Amcon Construction of Eagan, Minn., served as the design-build general contractor on the project, and KFI (Karges-Faulconbridge, Inc.) provided the mechanical and electrical engineering for the building.

About Great River Energy

Great River Energy is a not-for-profit cooperative which provides wholesale electric service to 28 distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Those member cooperatives distribute electricity to more than 639,000 member consumers – or about 1.7 million people. With \$3 billion in assets, Great River Energy is the second largest electric power supplier in Minnesota and one of the largest generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives in the United States. Great River Energy’s member cooperatives range from those in the outer-



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ring suburbs of the Twin Cities to the Arrowhead region of Minnesota to the farmland of southwestern Minnesota. Great River Energy's largest distribution cooperative serves more than 120,000 member-consumers; the smallest serves about 2,400. For more information, visit www.GreatRiverEnergy.com.