

**Duluth Energy Efficiency Program (DEEP)  
Report on Program Effectiveness and Energy Savings  
February 4, 2010**

The Duluth Energy Efficiency Program (DEEP) is an innovative approach to engaging the City's homeowners in improving the energy efficiency of their homes. Reduced utility costs will be achieved through home audits, education on available energy saving options, and a revolving loan fund to finance home energy improvements.

Accomplishments to date:

Program Development

In February, 2009, the City of Duluth issued a Request for Proposals to organizations interested in overseeing the implementation of DEEP and in coordinating access to the various energy related programs in Duluth. **Common Ground Construction**, which is part of the Northern Communities Land Trust, was selected as the entity to lead the development of DEEP.

In August, 2009, Common Ground submitted an application to the City's Community Development Division for DEEP funding. A **grant award of \$187,200** has been approved by the Duluth City Council, with funds available April 1, 2010. Also in August, Common Ground welcomed on board an **Americorps volunteer** to work full-time on the DEEP program.

Common Ground applied to the State of Minnesota and secured **Office of Energy Security (OES) Weatherization Outreach funding**. Although regional in approach, grant funds will be used to supplement DEEP marketing and educational efforts in Duluth. Specifically, OES Weatherization Outreach will support education seminars, capacity building, and a second "Green Canvas" campaign (see below for description of first Green Canvas).

The DEEP was selected to participate in the **Nerdery Overnight Challenge for website development**, which provides in-kind technical support and assistance valued up to \$150,000. The Challenge takes place on March 20-21, 2010.

The City of Duluth and the Office of Energy Security are currently finalizing the **State of Minnesota Grant Contract**. A resolution to accept the \$1.5 million dollar grant has been filed for approval at the Duluth City Council meeting to be held on February 22, 2010.

Energy Audits

Common Ground, in cooperation with Minnesota Power, developed a database and reporting tool to generate the **Home Energy Rating Reports (HERR)**. Residents that have taken advantage of the HERR received a personalized description of their total energy consumption, a home heating index rating, as well as a comparison of their home's performance to others in the neighborhood.

HERR participants will be some of the first homeowners contacted when funds are made available to conduct the in-depth **Home Performance Audit** under the DEEP program. The partnership between Common Ground, Minnesota Power and Comfort Systems for auditing of homes is currently being finalized. There are over 120 households on the waiting list. In February, a Request for Qualifications will be issued to select home auditors.

### Marketing

Common Ground joined in a partnership with Duluth Community Action Program, Minnesota Power and the City's Comfort Systems utilities to develop a city-wide strategy for Green Duluth. As part of this effort, Community Action organized a 2009 summer youth project where young people went door-to-door providing information on energy programs (including DEEP), and encouraging residents to participate in the Home Energy Rating Report (HERR). This campaign, called the "**Green Canvas**" will be repeated in the summer of 2010.

Because of the delay in finalizing the Grant Contract with OES, marketing has been opportunity driven. A **homeowner workshop** was held on October 21st, with 16 people in attendance. DEEP **informational display tables** were set-up at Duluth's Local Initiatives Support Corporation's (LISC) "Connecting the Dot" event, the Lake Superior Harvest Fest and Energy Fair, and The Salvation Army Energy Awareness Expo. A press conference was held, and a **feature article published** in the Duluth News Tribune. **Upcoming presentations** have been scheduled for the Energy Design Conference & Expo on February 24th, the Northeast Clean Energy Resource Teams meeting February 4th, and the U.S. Green Building Council's "Greening the Heartland" on May 19th.

### Partnerships

The DEEP concept was developed, and has been guided, by an **Advisory Team** made up of City of Duluth's Community Development staff, a Duluth City Councilor that also represents the local Zeppa Foundation, the Director of LISC, Comfort Systems (City's natural gas utility), Minnesota Power, Duluth At Work, and staff of Common Ground. The Advisory Team has held 15 meetings.

Initial meetings have been held with Comfort Systems, Neighborhood Housing Services, Duluth Housing & Redevelopment Authority's Rehab Department, and local financial institution on the delivery of the DEEP revolving loan fund and the **coordination with existing energy and home improvement programs and funding sources**.

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