

## Otter Tail Power

### House Therapy & Appliance Aid

Thanks in large part to the vision and charisma of program manager Ceedy Mewszel and her colleagues, Otter Tail Power Company has designed and implemented two rather exceptional programs to assist low income customers in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Their humor is apparent even in the programs' names, House Therapy and Appliance Aid, the latter of which comes complete with a "ten-step process" in fond recognition of the program's acronym, "AA".

While House Therapy began in 1988 as part of a mandated initiative it has evolved over time and is primarily designed to alleviate the financial pressures on low-income customers with all-electric heat, an expensive proposition in the cold winters of Minnesota. Over its five-year history the program has served 820 homes with deep levels of savings. The average savings per home is ~1,332 kWh per year at an installed average cost of ~\$1,600.

A House Therapy treatment may include any number of cost-effective energy efficiency measures. Measures installed include ceiling, wall, floor, foundation, and rim insulation; weatherstripping and caulking; water heater jackets, water heater pipe insulation and electric water heater replacement; door and window replacement; thermostat relocation; space heater replacement; energy-efficient light fixture installation; stratification fan installation; and residential demand controller installation.

Appliance Aid is currently in its pilot stage and is available as a free service to all low income customers regardless of their space heating source provided they have electric hot water heating. AA promotes the efficiency of customers' refrigerators, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, and other electric appliances. Compact fluorescent lamps, low-flow showerheads, water heater and pipe insulation, and if necessary a new electric water heater, are installed at no cost. On average Otter Tail spends less than \$130 per home for measures installed and labor costs.

One of the unique and successful features of both programs is that they are delivered through Community Action Program (CAP) Agencies rather than using in-house staff or contractors. The utility and the CAP Agencies both reap benefits from this arrangement. Otter Tail credits much of the programs' success to the CAP's ability to deliver the program as a result of their knowledge of the local communities. The sixteen CAPs involved deliver a valuable service to their customers and are allowed 7.5% of the installation costs to cover their administration of the programs. While providing a source of revenues for the CAPs, the delivery mechanism is also believed to provide substantial public relations benefits for Otter Tail Power.

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### OTTER TAIL POWER House Therapy & Appliance Aid

**Sector:** Residential

**Measures:** Low-income weatherization measures including building envelope, lighting, water heating and space conditioning

**Mechanism:** Audit and retrofits performed through Community Action Program Agencies

**History:** Started in Summer 1988

#### House Therapy 1992 Data

Energy savings:	366 MWh
Lifecycle energy savings:	5,495 MWh
Capacity savings:	0.11 MW
Cost:	\$264,300

#### House Therapy Cumulative Data (1988 - 1992)

Energy savings:	2,740 MWh
Lifecycle energy savings:	16,384 MWh
Capacity savings:	0.328 MW
Cost:	\$940,900

#### Appliance Aid 1992 Data

Energy savings:	59 MWh
Lifecycle energy savings:	878 MWh
Capacity savings:	0.012 MW
Cost:	\$26,700

The Results Center produced 126 profiles of the most successful energy efficiency and renewable energy programs in the United States and around the world in the early and mid 1990s. With the support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ted Flanigan directed a research team at Colorado-based IRT Environment to produce and distribute these exceptional examples. Thanks to strong demand for solid case studies, The Results Center was supported by dozens of major utilities and energy associations worldwide. Today, The Results Center is managed again by Ted Flanigan, now at California-based EcoMotion Incorporated, a firm focused on strategic consulting, information dissemination, program design, outreach services, and aggressive implementation. To nominate highly successful programs, contact: The Results Center, c/o EcoMotion, 15375 Barranca Parkway, F-104, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 450-7155, or [TFlanigan@EcoMotion.us](mailto:TFlanigan@EcoMotion.us)