

MINNESOTA SOLAR TOUR SHINES A LIGHT ON GREATER MINNESOTA INSTALLATIONS



The Minnesota Renewable Energy Society (MRES), a non-profit that promotes solar energy in Minnesota through education and the demonstration of practical application, has been conducting the Minnesota Solar Tour for about 14 years via volunteers or staff located in the Twin Cities area. The goal of the tour is to increase people’s confidence that they can make improvements to their own homes or businesses by giving them a “hands on” experience with working products and a friendly interaction with someone who is an owner and user, rather than a sales person.

MRES has found the Greater Minnesota portion of the tour to be consistently lagging behind in media attention and attendance. Hoping to rectify that, the strategy for 2014 was twofold: First, to separate the Twin Cities Metro Solar Tour from the Greater Minnesota Solar Tour, and second, to hire local organizers. Separating the tours helped to focus more time and attention on expanding educational efforts statewide.

MRES was awarded Seed Grants from the Central and Southeast CERT Regions to help hire people who lived and worked in those areas. “These people had more connections to the solar and wind businesses, the renewable energy homeowners, the media in the area, and the community groups than the volunteers and staff living in the Twin Cities ever could,” said Laura Burrington, the Managing Director for MRES during the 2014 tour.

“Originally we had planned on having the tours on the same day in the end of May,” said Burrington. “In March we really started to feel like, once again, the Twin Cities work was overtaking the attention we wanted to give Greater Minnesota. At that point we decided to move the Greater Minnesota Solar Tour back to the National Solar Tour date of October 4th. This gave our regional people more time to organize a stronger event.”

Source: <http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/blog/minnesota-solar-tour-shines-light-greater-minnesota-installations>