



Commerce Department Overview

[MN.gov/Commerce](https://mn.gov/commerce)

What does Commerce do?

Protect all Minnesotans
in their everyday financial transactions by
investigating and evaluating services, and
advocating that the services
be fair, accessible, and affordable.

Leadership team

- Temporary Commissioner Grace Arnold
- Chief Deputy Commissioner Anne O'Connor
- Energy Resources - Deputy Commissioner Aditya Ranade
- Energy Resources - Asst Commissioner Katherine Blauvelt
- Financial Institutions - Deputy Commissioner Max Zappia
- Insurance – Deputy Commissioner Grace Arnold
- Gov't Affairs & External Relations - Assistant Commissioner Peter Brickwedde
- Enforcement - Assistant Commissioner Matt Vatter

What are Commerce's services?

Protecting all Minnesotans in their everyday financial transactions in these areas

Financial
Institutions

Insurance

Energy
Resources

Unclaimed
Property

Enforcement

Telecommunications

Licensing

Senior financial fraud

Petrofund

Weights &
Measures

Consumer
Service Center

CONSUMERS

BUSINESS



**Commerce
Department**

- Provide consumer protection and assistance
- Deliver federal and state energy and telecommunications programs
- Advocate for the public interest before energy-related regulatory bodies
- Conduct investigations of suspected insurance-related fraud and suspected financial fraud against seniors & vulnerable adults
- Examine financial institutions, insurance and other financial transaction services for safety and soundness
- License over 250,000 professionals and businesses

Where would you see Commerce?

With You Every Day

Wherever you are in Minnesota ...

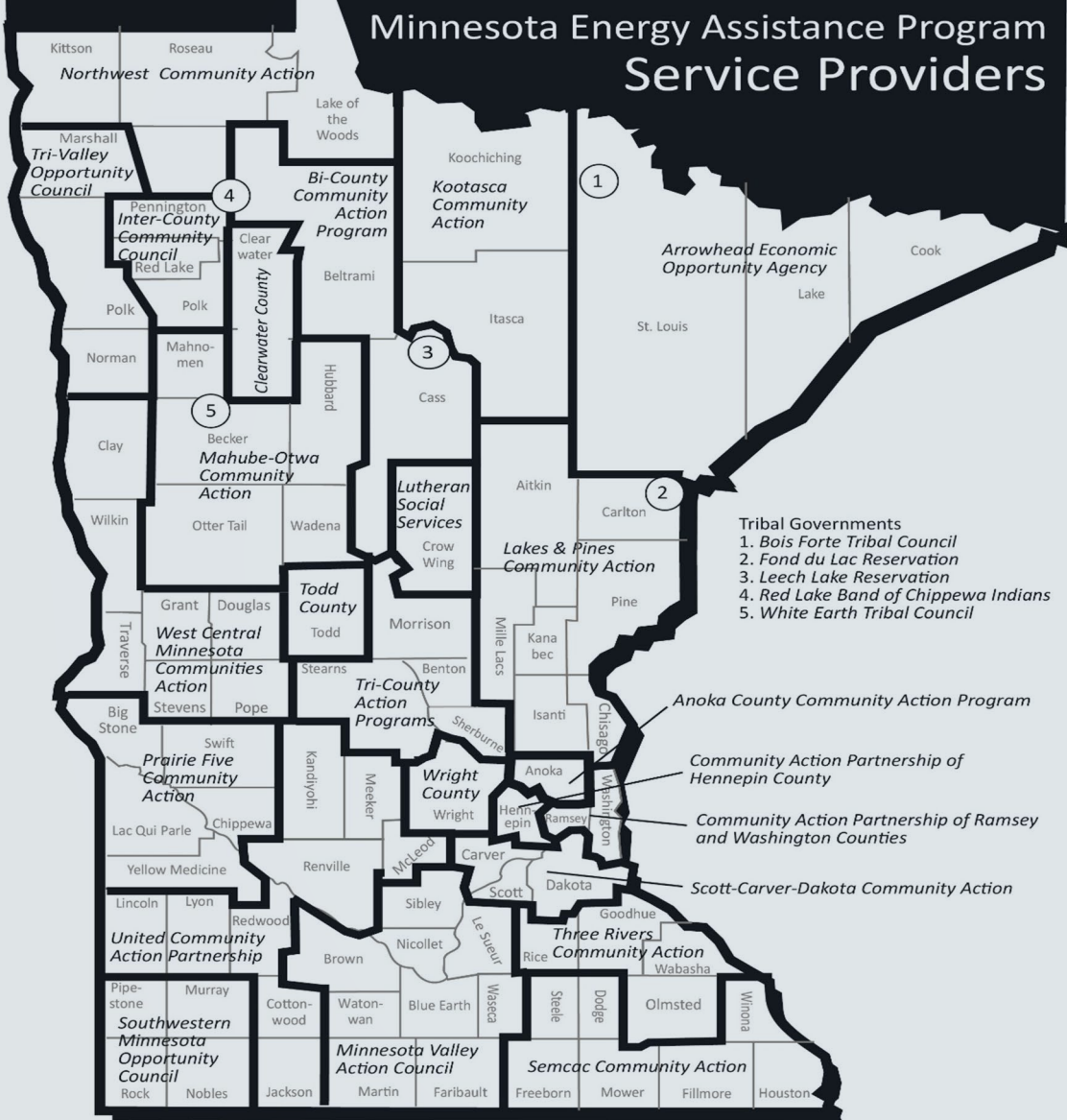
Filling up
on gas

Purchasing a
home

Rebuilding
after a
disaster

Working to
reduce
energy
consumption

Minnesota Energy Assistance Program Service Providers



- Tribal Governments**
1. Bois Forte Tribal Council
 2. Fond du Lac Reservation
 3. Leech Lake Reservation
 4. Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
 5. White Earth Tribal Council

Updated October 2019

Statewide Reach

Commerce services and programs reach across the state in many different ways

Commerce programs with regional staff or partners include:

- Energy Assistance Program
- Weatherization Assistance Program
- Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs)
- Financial Institutions
- Weights & Measures
- Licensing

Division of Energy Resources

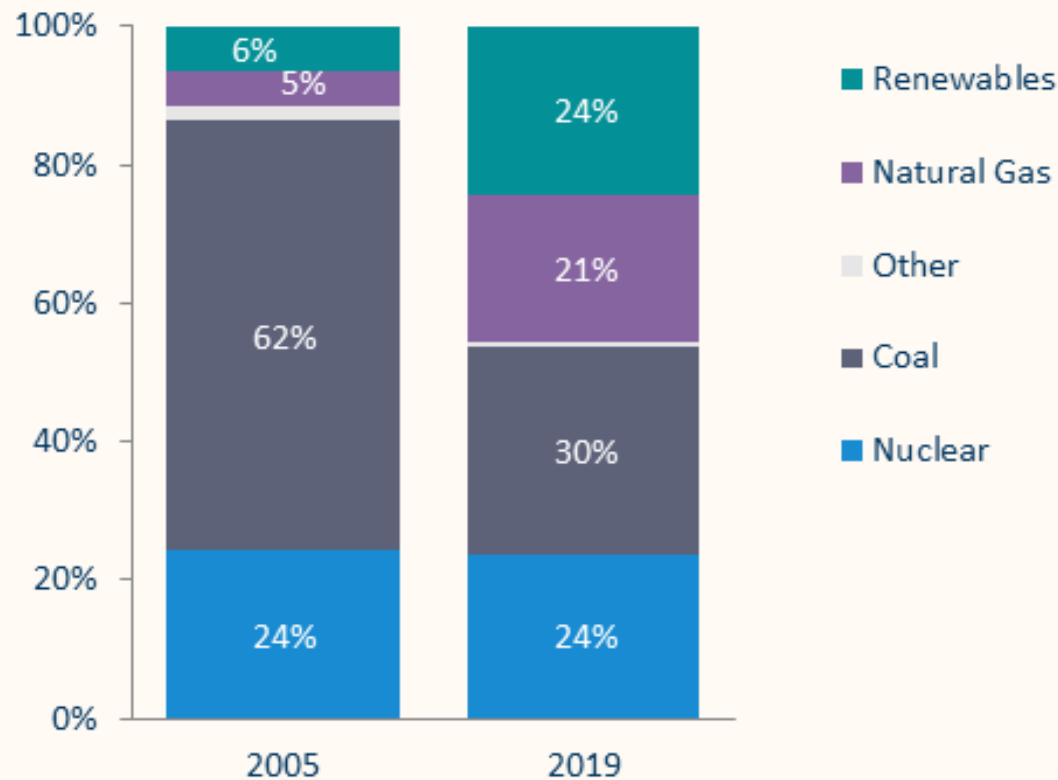
- Energy Regulation and Planning
- State Energy Office
- Energy Assistance Program
- Energy Environmental Review and Analysis
- Telecommunications

Division of Energy Resources

- Promote clean, reliable and affordable energy for Minnesota businesses and homes
- Advocate on behalf of public interest in state and federal regulatory proceedings
- Maintain state emergency energy planning and recovery plans
- Oversee the Conservation Improvement Program, including Conservation Applied Research & Development
- Promote energy-efficient buildings and emerging energy technologies
- Administer the Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization Assistance Programs

Minnesota's Energy Resources

Electricity Generated in Minnesota 2005 vs. 2019



Source: U.S. EIA

Transformation of electricity generated in Minnesota:

Between 2005 and 2019:

- Renewable energy increased from 6% to 24%
- Coal power dropped from 62% to 30%

Minnesota's Energy Resources



Energy Efficiency

Saved
Minnesotans
over **\$6 Billion**



Coal Generation in MN

Reduced from
over 60% to
under 30%



Electric Sector
CO₂ Emissions

Reduced by **28%**
from 2005
baseline



Renewable Energy

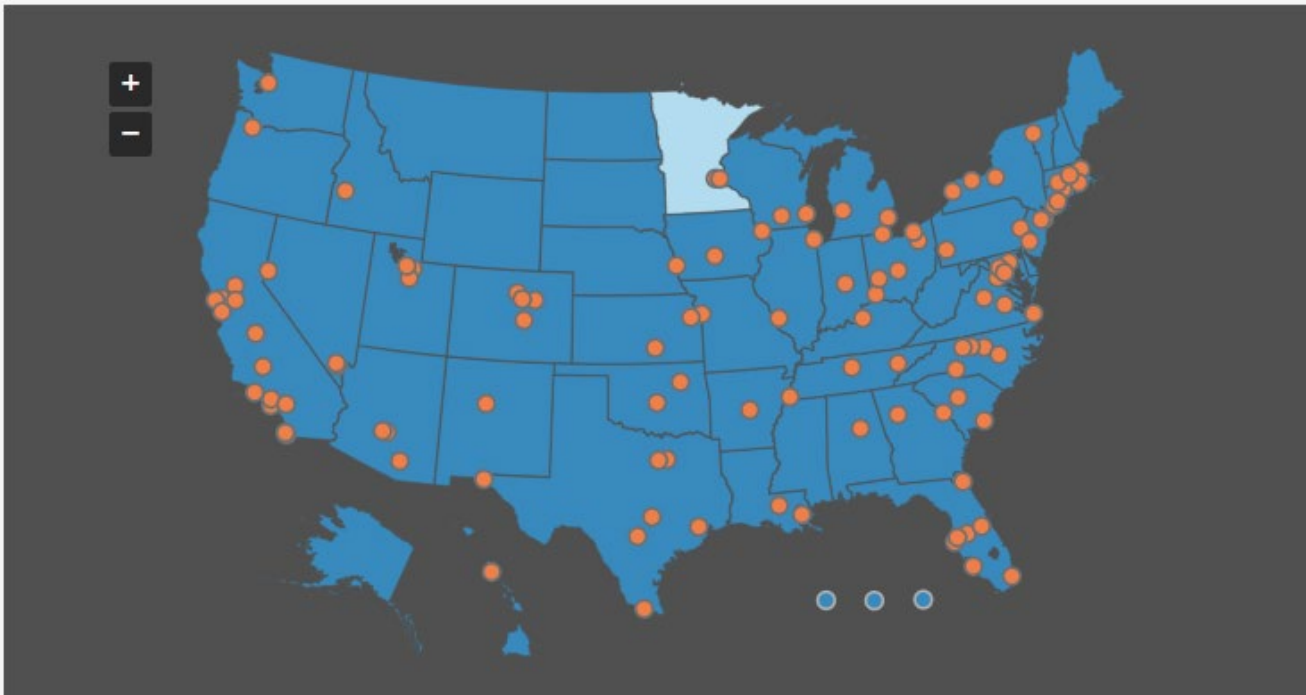
Developed over
5,000 MW's of
Wind & Solar

Minnesota's Energy Resources



State and Local Policy Database

[View State Rankings](#)



State Scorecard Rank

9

Minnesota

32.0

Scored out of 50

Updated 12/2020

January 2021 report from the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy:

- Minnesota ranks #9
- Wisconsin #26
- Iowa #36
- South Dakota #45
- North Dakota #48

Aditya Ranade, PhD Deputy Commissioner Energy Resources

Commerce priorities for Energy Resources

- Accelerate use of carbon-free energy
- Enable energy efficiency
- Increase equity in energy access, affordability and reliability for most vulnerable Minnesotans



Energy Regulation and Planning

Energy Regulation and Planning staff:

- Work to ensure affordable and reliable energy service, while minimizing adverse impacts to the environment
- Represent the public interests before the Public Utilities Commission
- Investigate matters involving energy reliability, financial issues and energy conservation for rate regulated utilities
- Analyze resource plans, rate cases, rider filings, certificates of need, etc.
- Provide oversight of the Conservation Improvement Program

MN State Energy Office

State Energy Office staff:

- Provide ongoing clean energy policy, program, data, and technical expertise
- Provide granting oversight to \$300+ million in funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects
- Administer the statewide Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program
- Maintain state emergency energy planning and recovery plans
- Educate 200,000+ Minnesotans through the Energy Information Center activities

Energy Assistance Program

Energy Assistance Program staff:

- Administer the Home Energy Assistance Program
- Provide oversight to federal funding for energy assistance payments to energy vendors statewide

In 2020, the Energy Assistance Program

- Served nearly 118,000 Minnesota households
- Provided grants averaging \$500 per household

Households included nearly 57,000 seniors, almost 35,000 young children, and about 7,500 veterans

Mary Otto

Commerce Dept Tribal Liaison

Role: strengthening
Commerce & Tribal relations

Energy issue: Tribal
households in Minnesota
have the highest energy
burden in the state



Energy Environmental Review & Analysis

Energy Environmental Review and Analysis staff:

- Direct all aspects of environmental review and permitting of large energy projects
- Provide the Public Utilities Commission with project management, technical analysis and facilitate public involvement around environmental impact statements
- Participate in the state's long-range energy planning and policy development processes
- Represent the Department of Commerce on the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board

Petrofund

- Manage the state's program for providing assistance to address leaking petroleum storage tanks

Leaks from petroleum storage tanks are one of the nation's leading causes of groundwater pollution

- 13,300 = Number of leak sites addressed since 1987
- \$460 million = Approximate number of reimbursements paid out to eligible applicants since 1987
- Over 550 = Abandoned underground petroleum storage tanks removed from approximately 360 properties since 2004

Joel Fischer, Director Petrofund Program

Applicants for leaking
petroleum storage tank on
their properties:

- Service stations, other businesses
- Homeowners & farmers
- Schools
- State & local governments



Petrofund

Reimbursement Program

- Addresses contamination from leaking petroleum storage tanks
- 90% reimbursement of investigation and clean-up costs
- Types of clean-up may involve excavating and disposing of contaminated soil

Abandoned Underground Storage Tank Removal Program

- Oversees state contractors in removal of abandon petroleum storage tanks
- Addresses old, forgotten petroleum products that may cause contamination

Telecommunications

- Advocate for Minnesota consumers and the public interest before telecommunications regulatory bodies and enforces landline, voice service telecommunications regulations
- Work with individual consumers and advocacy groups in identifying unmet needs/consumer protection issues and identifying potential solutions
- Administer the Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) program
 - TAM provides Minnesota Relay, which allows individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled to place and receive telephone calls

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Commerce's consumer advocacy

- Worked with the state's utilities to get a voluntary pause on shutoffs, ensuring families have reliable power and heat while they are asked to stay home to combat the pandemic
- Worked with the Legislature on authority to extend regulatory guidelines and provide relief to our industries
- Worked with state-regulated fully insured health plans to waive co-pays and deductibles for COVID-19 testing and treatments
- Worked with our state-chartered banks and credit unions to instill continued consumer trust in the safety of funds held in financial institutions to prevent a widespread bank run with the uncertainty at the beginning of the pandemic



Who can you contact ...

... about energy questions?

Energy Information Center and Energy Assistance Programs

Energy.info@state.mn.us

651-539-1886 | 800-657-3710

... about a leaking or abandoned petroleum tank?

Petrofund Program 651-539-1600

Commerce Government Affairs

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