

PAID MARKETING FEATURE

Business Plus

Spotlight

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Xcel Energy is committed to staying on a clean energy path

Despite the United States pulling out of the Paris climate accord, company continues plans to reduce its carbon footprint and invest in a clean energy future





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Since the United States pulled out of the Paris climate accord this spring—at a time when federal carbon emissions rules have been put on hold—the energy industry has been faced with questions regarding where it stands and what will happen next. At Xcel Energy, its most senior leaders are reaffirming the company’s commitment to initiatives that will consistently and significantly reduce carbon emissions and transition its operations for the future.

“The fact is that Xcel Energy has been pursuing a clean energy strategy that would have met these federal and international standards — and we’re not wavering from that path,” says Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO of Xcel Energy. “Our approach and plans are based on the needs and interests

of the customers and communities we serve, sound economics, and prudent risk management.”

As an industry, electric utilities already have reduced carbon emissions by 25 percent since 2005. The Paris agreement would have required a reduction of 26 to 28 percent by 2025. “Our industry is reducing carbon emissions and doing so 10 years in advance of international agreements,” Fowke added.

As reported in its most recent corporate responsibility report, last year Xcel Energy achieved a 30-percent reduction in carbon emissions; and the utility is on track to reduce emissions company-wide 45 percent by 2021. These reductions are the result of remarkable changes in how the utility produces

energy and the addition of more carbon-free energy sources into a diverse energy mix.

“We are responding to our customers’ evolving expectations and providing them with the choices they want and expect,” says David Eves, Xcel Energy – Colorado president. “That is why we are adding more wind and solar energy, offering customers a wide variety

of programs to use energy more efficiently, and modernizing power plants to reduce emissions and integrate more renewable energy on to the system.”

Xcel Energy has been the nation’s No. 1 utility wind provider for a dozen years, and is taking steps to retain that title for the long term. The company’s plans are bolstered by the largest

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the state and the largest east of the Rocky Mountains. The company is also expanding existing private (rooftop) solar and solar community garden opportunities, and will be launching a new offering in Colorado—called Renewable*Connect—for customers to purchase up to 100 percent solar power for their home or business.

The company continues to transform its traditional power plant fleet to more flexible, low-emission technologies that can support this growing renewable energy portfolio. This includes retiring older, less efficient coal units and replacing them with natural gas and renewables.



multi-state investment in wind capacity in the country, which includes proposals for 11 new wind farms in seven states.

On Colorado's eastern plains, construction is already well underway for the Rush Creek Wind Project—an investment expected to save customers more than \$1.1 billion over the next 30 years, while providing the lowest-cost wind power on the state's system. "This winning combination of good economics and abundant renewable resources allows us to give our customers and communities what they want, regardless of federal policy," says Fowke.

Xcel Energy reached another milestone last year, bringing the Comanche Solar power plant online. Located in Pueblo, it is the largest solar generating facility in

"We have achieved this kind of progress because clean electricity is affordable electricity. The average Xcel Energy residential customer's electricity bill has stayed flat over the past four years, making electricity a bargain, especially considering all it does to drive our communities and support a clean-tech based economy," says Eves.

"Our industry's progress has been remarkable, but it's not done yet. With further advancement in renewable energy technology, continued support of state public policy and the continued interest of our customers, I believe that our company can achieve a carbon emissions reduction target of 60 percent by 2030 from 2005 levels, all while keeping bill increases well below the rate of inflation," says Fowke.

