

District Energy New Release

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DISTRICT COOLING SERVICE EXPANSION IS UNDERWAY

ST. PAUL, Minn. District Cooling St. Paul, an affiliate of District Energy St. Paul, has begun construction of a new cooling plant at 10th and Sibley Streets in the northeast corner of downtown St. Paul. The new plant will allow the company to expand its service area while improving the efficiency and reliability of its current district cooling system, which serves nearly 60 percent of the downtown business district.

The new facility will house highly efficient water chillers and a thermal storage tank. Thermal storage allows water used for air conditioning to be chilled at night when electric prices are low. The water is then delivered to customers during the day when air conditioning is needed. This strategy helps district cooling customers save money and reduces the need to build additional power plants to meet regional peak electric demands.

District cooling customers and the community benefit in additional ways. Buildings connected to the system do not need chillers or cooling towers, reducing capital and operating costs, saving valuable building space and improving the city's skyline. Environmental benefits include the elimination of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigerants and the use of groundwater to produce air conditioning in individual buildings.

"Demand for district cooling service is so strong that our current chiller plant has reached its peak capacity of 18,000 tons in just eight years," says District Energy President Anders Rydaker. With the new cooling plant, we can expand into a new section of the city and also serve additional customers in the downtown core.

District Energy and BWBR Architects worked with District 17's North Quadrant Advisory Committee, the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Design Center, the project's nearest neighbors, city staff and other community organizations for several years to choose a site and then finalize architectural and engineering specifications for the project. Materials and colors were carefully selected to harmonize with surrounding buildings, says Doug Maust, who directs District Energy's development. The final design also reflects patterns and rhythms that are found in the neighborhood. Hallberg Associates of White Bear Lake and TKDA of St. Paul are providing engineering services.

The project has two components that have been carefully integrated into a single design. CBI Services, a subsidiary of Chicago Bridge and Iron Company, is building the thermal storage tank, which will be 90 feet high and 90 feet in diameter and will hold four million gallons of water. Tank construction began May 1, with a target completion date of December 15, 2002. Construction of the building to house the chillers, which will be located immediately west of the tank, will begin in mid-June 2002, with completion by April 15, 2003.

District Energy St. Paul is a private, nonprofit, community-based corporation providing district heating and cooling services in St. Paul, Minnesota. For more information about the company, visit www.districtenergy.com.