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**Center for Energy and Environment**  
212 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, Suite 560  
Minneapolis, MN 55401  
[www.mncee.org](http://www.mncee.org)

Contacts:  
Keith Butcher  
612.335.5890  
[kbutcher@mncee.org](mailto:kbutcher@mncee.org)

Cathy Kennedy  
952.944.6559  
[cathy@cathrynkennedy.com](mailto:cathy@cathrynkennedy.com)

**CENTER FOR ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT  
AWARDED XCEL ENERGY GRANT  
TO STUDY BIOMASS RENEWABLE ENERGY**

**MINNEAPOLIS – MAY 11, 2005** – Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) has been awarded an 18-month, \$397,500 grant to study the use of biomass in generating electricity in Minnesota.

The grant, awarded by the Renewable Development Fund (RDF) and funded by Xcel Energy, was approved by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

As part of the study, CEE will create a “community framework” designed to aid local and state officials in determining the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of regional biomass generated-electricity projects that use local biomass resources.

CEE’s study will be the first of its kind in the state, and will provide a set of guidelines for examining all future biomass proposals.

Current Minnesota biomass energy projects encompass everything from burning waste wood in St. Paul, to burning turkey litter in Benson, to running an anaerobic digester powered by cow manure in Princeton. The broad and diverse applications for biomass energy development have made it difficult to examine and compare competing proposals. This is of concern given the limited funding currently available for biomass projects.

This biomass study will help set standards and determine criteria so that communities and legislators will gain a better understanding of how to use biomass resources efficiently.

“Biomass is a valuable component for renewable energy in Minnesota,” says Keith Butcher, manager of external affairs for CEE. “The use of biomass has tremendous potential not only as an alternative energy resource, but also for rural economic development. By promoting renewable energy in rural areas, we are creating jobs.”

CEE expects to begin the biomass study in July and complete it by December 2006.

Center for Energy and Environment is a nonprofit organization based in Minneapolis. CEE was established in 1979 and is the leading nonprofit resource on energy efficiency and financing opportunities in the state.

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