

Janet Streff retires as SEO manager after 20 years of public service

It might be hard to measure Janet Streff's impact in BTUs saved, clean energy megawatts generated, or carbon emissions reduced. But it's clear that the State Energy Office manager of the past 17 years has been a true champion of energy policies and programs that have greatly benefited Minnesota—and that rank with the nation's best. Streff will retire on March 4 after 20 years of public service.

"Janet has been the consummate professional, and no one has been a better advocate for energy efficiency and renewable energy over the past 20 years," said Bill Grant, deputy commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, who oversees the Energy Division. "She has led an exemplary clean energy agenda and has been vital in implementing Minnesota's energy policies and programs. As she leaves, our state is poised to meet or exceed its ambitious clean energy and energy-saving goals."

Indeed, Minnesota has ranked among the top 10 states in 8 of the past 9 years in the State Energy Efficiency Scorecard, a measure of statewide energy performance conducted by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE). And under Streff's watch, the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Conservation Improvement Program have been singled out several times for top performance by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Helped establish B3 and CERTs

Streff also oversees programs such as the Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program and public sector building retrofit programs such as the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program. She was instrumental in establishing the B3 (Buildings, Benchmarks, and Beyond!) suite of tools, which includes the B3 sustainable building design guidelines with the embedded SB 2030 energy standard, as well as the B3 benchmarking tool. She was also a key player in creating the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs). She is currently chair of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) and served on numerous boards and workgroups during her career.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to have served the public the last 20 years and pleased that we've had a positive impact on the lives of Minnesotans via our initiatives to save energy and reduce our carbon footprint," said Streff. "I've had the privilege to work under three administrations and with deputy commissioners who were great proponents of clean energy. I'm fortunate to have been surrounded by capable and dedicated staff to carry out our charge."

Streff spent the first 15 years of her career in commercial construction management in the San Francisco Bay Area. She settled in the Twin Cities in the early 1990s to be near family and begin her state public service in the energy field in 1995. She worked first on energy codes at the Minnesota Department of Public Service and then on codes in general for the Building Codes and Standards Division at the Minnesota Department of Administration. She became SEO manager in 1999.



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'To infinity and beyond!'

Streff said her role in establishing the B3 guidelines and benchmarking tools and CERTs are among her proudest accomplishments. B3 emerged in 2001 out of a legislative mandate and gave Minnesota public building owners the tools to manage and reduce energy costs and measure energy savings. It is a partnership of the Departments of Commerce and Administration.

"I came up with the B3 name late on a Friday afternoon when we were trying to figure out a short moniker for the project," Streff recalls. "I had seen the movie Toy Story, with the popular line from Buzz Lightyear, 'To infinity and beyond!' so I thought 'Buildings, Benchmarks, and Beyond!' sounded pretty good. Over a decade later, we are definitely in the 'beyond' phase."

CERTs is a statewide partnership to connect individuals and their communities to the resources needed to identify and implement community-based clean energy projects. It was developed in 2004 in response to a Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) grant. "Diane Jensen, Executive Director of The Minnesota Project and I worked on it together," said Streff. "The idea was to develop regional groups to bring clean energy opportunities to all areas of the state. CERTs provided a better conduit to get information to Minnesotans and to hear from people from around the state on clean energy."

In her retirement, Streff looks forward to more free time with friends and family, including five grandchildren, but she also wants to continue to track progress on clean energy issues.

"It's been a wonderful journey, and satisfying to reflect and honor our energy accomplishments," said Streff. "I'm grateful for our efforts and to all who have contributed to Minnesota's clean energy initiatives."