



## Minnesota Power Utilizes "OARS" to Align Business Practices with Future Needs

With the phased rollout of automated meter reading (AMR) starting in the fall of 2002, **Minnesota Power** sought opportunities to achieve their corporate mission of maximizing resources and minimizing write-offs. They looked to **OPUS<sup>21</sup> Management Solutions** to strategically focus their leadership team to create new roadmaps and build performance measurements for achievement of this objective through an Operation Assessment and Recommended Solutions (OARS) initiative.

"It was nice to have people that know the utility business from the inside conduct thorough interviews with the leadership team and review all of our existing processes," said **Sue Thompson, Minnesota Power's Manager of Customer and Community Service**. "OPUS<sup>21</sup> not only developed a well thought-out approach to where we go from here - but how to get there."

"OARS is an opportunity to review the baseline functionality of an organization to search for efficiency improvements and opportunities to implement new initiatives to enhance the performance of an organization," says **Greg Straub, OPUS<sup>21</sup>'s Director of Corporate Development and Strategic Planning**. "Minnesota Power benefited through a heightened awareness for all members of the leadership team on what each work group was doing and how to gain in efficiencies through the process enhancements we recommended."

OARS delivered benchmarking performance data, process review and recommended solutions resulting in over 50 process initiatives and developmental opportunities. Each initiative will contribute to the bottom line performance of Minnesota Power while enhancing customer service.



Minnesota Power's  
Corporate Headquarters  
Duluth, MN

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**Minnesota Power**, a division of Allete, is engaged in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Allete is a uniquely diversified company with businesses in 42 states and nine Canadian provinces.

**OPUS<sup>21</sup> Management Solutions** is a strategic organization focused on maximizing resources and minimizing write-offs through people, processes and technology. Specific solutions include organizational assessment and development, CIS data hosting, inbound / outbound call center activities, first and third party recovery, and skill development of CSRs, in house collectors and leadership teams.



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