



## 2024 MARC Conference List of Tours

### Wednesday, June 12, 2024

**Each tour leaves the Renaissance Minneapolis Hotel, The Depot, at approximately 10 a.m., unless otherwise noted. The tour return time to the hotel is listed for each tour. Please note that some of the tours require participants to wear closed-toe shoes that are appropriate for walking on uneven surfaces and walking/standing for long periods of time. Accessibility restrictions are noted.**

**Xcel Energy Sherco Solar Project (returns at 3 p.m.):** Located near Becker, MN. This project, currently under construction, is composed of 3 solar projects built to replace capacity from Sherburne County Generating Plant Unit 2, which was retired in 2023. The combined generating capacity of the project will be 700 MW making it the largest installation in the upper Midwest. Although not part of the tour, this will also be the home of the future Form Energy Battery project. There is a one-hour bus ride to and from the facility, with an overall tour time of 3-4 hours. Lunch and personal protective equipment will be provided. Participants are required to wear closed toe, walking shoes. The tour will take place outside in the construction field.

<https://mn.my.xcelenergy.com/s/renewable/developers/sherco-solar-project>

**Xcel Energy Marshall Operations Facility (returns at 12 noon):** Be one of the first to tour this brand-new, state of the art facility, which will bring together Xcel Energy's Upper Midwest Transmission and Distribution Operations Center in one location. Constructed in 2023 with sustainability at the forefront, the facility transformed a remediated vacant site, which was formerly a coal ash landfill. Adjacent to the Mississippi River, the site maintains the migratory bird corridor and includes bird safe glass. Construction preserved existing trees on site and the property was designed with sustainable landscaping which captures and cleans stormwater runoff and provides wildlife habitat through stormwater treatment systems. Tour length is 60-90 minutes. Participants must be able to climb a flight of stairs.

<https://www.mwmo.org/projects/xcel-energy-green-infrastructure/>

**Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant (returns at 4:30 p.m.):** This is a rare opportunity to tour Xcel Energy's Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, located in Welch, MN. The Prairie Island nuclear plant provides carbon-free energy for more than one million customers throughout the Upper Midwest and will play an important role in achieving

Minnesota's goal of 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040 and their Clean Energy Transition. The facility, which is comprised of two nuclear reactors with a combined capacity of 1,100 MWs, has a 50-year track record of reliable service providing affordable, carbon-free generation to their customers. There is a 60-90 minute bus ride to and from the facility for an overall duration of 6.5 hours. Lunch and personal protective equipment are provided. Wear sturdy, closed-toe walking shoes. Cotton clothing is suggested as the plant environment may be very warm. All tour participants will be screened prior to arrival on-site and will go through a badging process upon arrival. You will need to present a valid government-issued ID for this process such as a passport, or state-issued ID or driver's license. You will also need to know your social security number and verbally provide it as part of the screening process. <https://stories.xcelenergy.com/ArticlePage/?id=Take-a-virtual-3D-tour-of-Prairie-Island-Nuclear-Generating-Plant>

**CenterPoint Energy Hydrogen Electrolyzer Pilot Project (participants will be divided into two groups. The first group leaves at 10 a.m. and returns at 11:30 a.m. The second group leaves at 12:30 p.m. and returns at 2 p.m.):** Tour CenterPoint Energy's green hydrogen pilot project to learn how they produce hydrogen and incorporate it into their gas distribution system in Minneapolis. CenterPoint was one of the first utilities in the country to produce green hydrogen, and they are excited to share how they are accelerating innovation and investing in decarbonization. During the tour, you will hear how the on-site electrolyzer works to produce hydrogen from renewable energy and water, and how this is blended in the natural gas system. With this pilot, they are capable of avoiding up to 1,200 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually, which is the energy use of nearly 140 homes. Their team is gaining operational experience with this exciting technology that is helping to advance how utilities and customers use hydrogen in their natural gas systems. You will also visit one of the gas peak shaving facilities, which aids in maintaining natural gas service to customers during winter's coldest days. Tour takes place outdoors, so dress for the weather. <https://investors.centerpointenergy.com/news-releases/news-release-details/centerpoint-energy-launches-green-hydrogen-project-minnesota>

**LJ Shosten Union Training Center (departure time is 9:45 a.m., returns at 11:15 a.m.):** Visit a union training center for millwright apprentices. The LJ Shosten Training Campus is part of the Carpenters Training Institute, a registered apprenticeship program run jointly by the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters (NCSRCC), and their signatory contractors. At the training center, millwright apprentices learn how to fabricate, install, level and align precision equipment and high-torque machinery. These are skills used throughout the energy sector, including building and maintaining traditional thermal power generating plants as well as renewable energy. Visitors will tour the training center, learn about how registered apprenticeship works, and meet apprentices and instructors. With

the new Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) apprenticeship requirements, registered apprenticeship will become a critical component of developing the workforce needed for the next generation of energy infrastructure. Tour duration is approximately one hour.

<https://www.carpenterstraininginstitute.org/apprenticeship-programs/millwright/>

**District Energy St. Paul (tour leaves at 10:30 a.m. and returns at 12:30 p.m.):** A pre-tour presentation provides an overview of District Energy St. Paul and the history that the system has in the community. The tour will walk participants through the plant and allow you to see what the different technologies look like up close. On the tour, you will see and learn about the chiller process, wood delivery/storage and the combined heat and power plant. You must wear closed-toe, flat shoes, and be able to navigate stairs and catwalks. The host will provide hard hats, safety glasses, and ear plugs. Be prepared for flights of stairs necessary to complete the tour. No elevators are available as alternatives to the stairs. The tour will be going outside briefly, unless the weather is limiting. Plant tours are only available for adults over the age of 18. Participants must fill out safety forms and sign in sheets on the day of the tour. <https://www.districtenergy.com/>

**NextEra Gopher Battery Energy Storage Project:** Tour NextEra's Gopher Battery Energy Storage Project in Anoka County, MN. Details (including departure and return times) will be sent to registrants as soon as possible.

**Walking Tour of Downtown Minneapolis with Minnesota Commissioner John Tuma (non-utility focused tour) (tour leaves at 10 a.m. and returns in approximately one hour):** Commissioner Tuma will lead participants on a walking tour of various sites of interest in downtown Minneapolis. This will be a fun tour and a great chance to interact informally with participants while visiting interesting sites around the city. The tour will take place outdoors, so please dress for the weather.

<https://www.minneapolis.org/neighborhoods/downtown/>