Member Spotlight

I am Bryan Bruley, regional director of gas operations for CenterPoint Energy. I currently serve as vice president and chair of the Finance Committee for the Minnesota Safety Council Board of Directors and have had the privilege of being involved with the safety council since 2011. CenterPoint Energy has been a key partner with the Minnesota Safety Council for many years prior to my tenure on the board and we look forward to a continued long-term relationship with them.

CenterPoint Energy’s roots in downtown Minneapolis date back to the 19th century, a lineage that has included building strong ties to the community and a focus on safety. CenterPoint Energy, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a domestic energy delivery company that includes electric transmission and distribution, natural gas distribution and energy services operations. The company serves more than five million metered customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. With nearly 8,000 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 150 years.

Though the company has undergone several name changes since then, one thing has always stayed the same: CenterPoint Energy’s commitment to safety and Minnesotans. The company’s employees give their best each day to deliver the energy that makes lives more comfortable, productive, and enjoyable and continue to look for more ways they can provide expertise, services and protect life and property.

What does safety mean to your company?

At CenterPoint Energy, safety and reliability of our operations are our top priorities whether at work or at home. We have an active safety culture and proactive safety and training staff and programs. Having safety as our number one core value underscores CenterPoint Energy’s commitment to sustaining a culture of safety excellence.

Emphasizing safety is not new for the company, and several successful programs are in place. We launched an initiative designed to engage employees across the company in making safety their top priority, regardless of their business unit or work location. To us, safety is not tied to a particular unit, but rather an umbrella theme for all safety efforts, including watching out for ourselves, others and how we operate our systems. The health and welfare of our employees is at the heart of what we do. Employees are encouraged to take safety home with them because potential hazards don’t stop at our doorstep. Applying these principles to the household and while driving, much like our professional duties, greatly reduces the chance of injuries. We truly express safety as a value when we continue to keep a safety mindset at home, on the road and at work. Keeping this mindset, we increase our chances of enjoying a long career as well as a long, healthy and rewarding life…even in retirement.

Describe a defining safety moment.

We realize that natural gas is a necessary and valued energy source for Minnesotans but if we all don’t work safely around it or use it safely it can be a source of danger. Unfortunately, we have responded to and experienced incidents resulting in the loss of human life and property. We continue to work hard to realize zero incidents on the job and remain vigilant towards our commitment to the communities where we live and work. A staggering 75 percent of our natural gas leaks and emergency response activities are caused by unsafe digging activities by those at work or at home in our communities. For this reason, communications about how to work safely and use natural gas safely is a top priority for us. We invest a lot of resources in educating our employees and the public about safety awareness.

What advice would you give to other safety leaders?

As leaders it is imperative we focus on unrelenting behavioral change — leading by example — and investing in and promoting safety in our operations, at home, at work and in the communities we service in order to create a long-term effect. It truly is important that we work together and make a continued investment in the safety of humankind. Enhancing abilities towards a strong safety culture aids our organizations ability to realize our vision and commitment to "Lead the nation in delivering energy, service and value," and demonstrates living our top core value of safety for human life and property and sending our employees home safely each day.