



NEWS RELEASE

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Climate organization sees spike in citizen activism in MN after alarming studies and extreme weather

MN350 revamps website to answer demand from everyday Minnesotans

After doubling its base of supporters in 2018, climate advocacy group MN350 reports the growth in awareness and advocacy among Minnesotans has not slowed in the first weeks of 2019. Kate Jacobson, Co-Executive Director, says MN350's database has grown to more than 20,000 Minnesotans, reflecting an unprecedented level of concern about preventing damage to our climate.

Meanwhile, the group's monthly reach on [Facebook](#) has grown 51 percent since September, now reaching 111,000 people a month. Its [Twitter](#) numbers have shown comparable growth.

"These numbers demonstrate that everyday people from all walks of life and backgrounds are getting involved in environmental issues," Jacobson said. "We feel it every week as more and more Minnesotans are contacting us to say, 'I have to do something. I can't sit on the sidelines any longer.'"

MN350 responded this week by launching a [redesigned website](#) aimed at Minnesotans who may not have been active previously. “We have a base of loyal supporters who’ve been lobbying and organizing and raising their voices with us for years,” said Communications Director Brett Benson. “We designed our new website to help the newly energized Minnesotan who is beginning to grasp the urgency of the problem. We want that person to feel hopeful but also to realize it’ll take all of us working together to protect our climate for future generations.”

MN350 noticed a steady uptick in interest throughout 2018, but the curve swung dramatically upward after October. That’s when a U.N. scientific panel released a climate change report setting 2030 as a stark deadline for systemic change to protect our climate. In November, California’s worst wildfire season on record highlighted how rising temperatures spawn larger and more frequent blazes. Finally, the federal government released a report on the Friday after Thanksgiving warning that left unchecked, climate change will shrink our economy and kill thousands.

By all measures, Minnesotans were paying attention, Jacobson said. “It’s not like those were the first ever reports on climate change. But we know it takes time, relationship-building and hearing a message multiple times to begin connecting the dots between those reports and the wildfires, our recent brutal cold and even bad air quality in the summer. It’s all about unveiling the sources of unchecked pollution that are damaging our climate and communities.”

MN350’s recent experience aligns with national research findings. Yale University last month reported its benchmark for concern about climate change grew nine percentage points from March to December 2018. A full 72 percent of Americans say climate change is personally important.

Stuart Henry of Minneapolis is in that group. He began volunteering with MN350 in 2017. “It’s encouraging to keep seeing bigger and bigger groups at MN350 meetings. That sense of community is a powerful antidote to what I see in the headlines.”

“We take seriously our responsibility to support this groundswell of interest in climate solutions and clean energy,” Benson said. “We want everyone who visits the new MN350.org to come away feeling hope and understanding that by acting in community, every one of us can help prevent damage to our climate. Everyone in Minnesota can do something to bring about a fast and equitable transition to a clean energy economy.”

ABOUT MN350

MN350 is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded in 2010 to promote climate justice through grassroots organizing. We are the Minnesota branch of the global organization 350.org, founded by Bill McKibben. We have fought for years to stop the Line 3 tars sands pipeline and other reckless expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure. We also are a leading partner in the new 100% Campaign to make Minnesota the next 100% clean energy state.

From MN350's [statement of mission and vision](#): "MN350 unites Minnesotans as part of a global movement to end the pollution damaging our climate, speed the transition to clean energy, and create a just and healthy future for all."

MN350's sister organization, [MN350 Action](#), was formed in summer 2018 as a 501(c)4 advocacy organization. MN350 Action endorsed 13 climate champions in the 2018 midterm elections, and 11 of those candidates won their local, state or national races.

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