

## **VIDEO GUIDANCE, INC.**

6500 City West Pkwy., Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55344

[www.videoguidance.com](http://www.videoguidance.com)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Randy Fordice, Great River Energy  
763-445-5713; 612-865-1366 - cell  
[rfordice@greenergy.com](mailto:rfordice@greenergy.com)

Gail D. Shore, for Video Guidance  
952.925.6102  
[gshore@winternet.com](mailto:gshore@winternet.com)

## **GREAT RIVER ENERGY REACHES OUT TO VIDEO GUIDANCE TO ENHANCE ITS GREEN INITIATIVES**

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (June 2008) – Great River Energy is no stranger to employing energy efficient and environmentally sustainable building features. Its new headquarters in Maple Grove, Minn. is applying to become a LEED Platinum project, one of less than 50 of its type in the world. A unique video conferencing solution is helping meet the standard by reducing electric use, saving fuel by reducing travel and helping employees be more productive.

Great River Energy enlisted the expertise of Eden Prairie's Video Guidance, the leading video, voice, streaming and web conferencing services provider in the Upper Midwest, to implement a high-definition video conferencing system to connect its employees, offices and business partners.

"Video Guidance has helped create a comprehensive video conferencing system that primarily reduces air and road travel, significantly minimizing the use of fuel and energy," said Jim Jones, Chief Information Officer of Great River Energy. "The technology is helping us achieve our rigorous goals to become more environmentally and energy efficient through the use of innovative ideas."

The Maple Grove facility utilizes a "codec-farm," which means that video conference units are shared across several rooms. There are seven conference rooms and only two centrally located video conference units that are shared between those rooms via video switching technology. This not only reduces overall costs, but reduces power consumption, as two codec's are running rather than seven.

Great River Energy's energy efficient campus in Maple Grove is seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification, which is the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) highest Green Building Rating System™. LEED is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

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In addition to reducing the company's energy consumption, the video conferencing technology is also saving Great River Energy's employees a significant amount of time and expenses.

Great River Energy has several offices in the region. In addition to the 300 employees at the Maple Grove headquarters, the company has 125 employees in Elk River and 400 employees at two large power plants in North Dakota. Great River Energy also has several offices in rural Minnesota from the southern to the northern parts of the state.

"The system includes a Multipoint Control Unit (MCU) that connects as many as 12 sites on a call at one time," said Brian Groff, Video Guidance's Sales Manager. "In our analysis we also include, at no charge to clients, an ROI and initial green initiative assessment."

Betsy O'Connor, Manager of Employee Relations and Staffing says her department will use the MCU to connect HR business partners in four different sites. "This system will help enable our group to communicate and to see each other at our regular department meetings."

The technology also allows Great River Energy to conference in individuals from other companies to help reduce travel time -- not only for its employees, but employees from other companies.

"Video conferencing is not just an internal communications tool," said Dave Snyder, one of Great River Energy's Systems Engineers. "We can now safely connect outside of our organization with our business partners and other key parties over the public internet. It offers all kinds of efficiencies and cost savings, while meeting our green initiatives."

### **About Great River Energy**

*Great River Energy provides wholesale electricity to more than 1.7 million people via 28 distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin. With more than \$2 billion in assets, Great River Energy is the second largest utility in the state, based on generating capacity, and the fifth largest generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in the United States. Great River Energy's member cooperatives range from those in the outer-ring suburbs of the Twin Cities to the Arrowhead region of Minnesota to the farmland of southwestern Minnesota. Great River Energy's largest distribution cooperative serves more than 120,000 member-consumers; the smallest serves just over 2,400.*

### **About Video Guidance**

*Eden Prairie, Minn.-based Video Guidance ([www.videoguidance.com](http://www.videoguidance.com)) was established in 1999. The full-service video conferencing provider specializes in "best of breed" technologies, which help organizations communicate more effectively. In 2007, Video Guidance was named to Inc's 5,000 list of the nation's fastest growing private companies. In 2006, the company was also*

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*recognized for the second consecutive year by The Business Journal as one of the 50 Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies in the Twin Cities metro area.*

*Video Guidance provides conferencing, telepresence and audio visual technologies and services that facilitate natural, visual communication. Strategic alliances include Conference Plus, Codian, Tandberg (OSLO: TAA.OL), Polycom (NASDAQ: PLCM), LifeSize, On Stream Media Corporation, Radvision (NASDAQ: RVSN), VBrick, and Accordent.*

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