



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development
Rm. 152 Federal Building 100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, Neb. 68508
(402) 437-5551 (Phone) (402) 437-5093 (TDY) (402) 437-5408 (Fax)

Cliff Kumm or Deb Yocum Beatrice, Neb. (402) 223-3125 ext. 4

USDA Rural Development Offers \$22.8 Million for New and Improved Energy Systems

Beatrice, Neb., May 11, 2004 – USDA Rural Development announces \$22.8 million in grant funds available nationwide for Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Projects for small businesses in communities of 50,000 populations or less and to farmers and ranchers. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was published in the May 5, 2004 Federal Register.

Monies are available for Renewable Energy Systems such as wind, solar, biomass, biogas, and geothermal projects. Funding is also available for Energy Efficiency Improvement projects such as improvements to HVAC systems, insulation, refrigeration, lighting, pumping systems, air systems, motor systems, irrigation efficiency improvements, etc. Businesses interested in energy efficiency improvements to their business should consider this program for potential funding assistance. Farmers and ranchers may be assisted with irrigation system energy improvements, methane digesters for livestock waste, grain handling systems, wind turbines, solar systems, etc.

Grants are available for commercially available or pre-commercially available technologies for up to 25 percent of eligible project costs. Renewable Energy System requests can be considered for a grant minimum of \$2,500 and maximum of \$500,000. Energy Efficiency Improvement requests can be for a grant minimum of \$2,500 and \$250,000 maximum.

Applications for energy grants are due no later than July 19, 2004.

Informational energy program meetings are scheduled as follows:

- May 18th: Columbus-9:00 a.m. Platte Co. Court House basement Community Room, 2610 14th St.; Norfolk-7:00 p.m. Life Long Learning Center, 801 East Benjamin Ave.
- May 19th: Fremont-9:30 a.m. County Extension Office, 1206 W. 23rd.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting Bob Prochaska, USDA Rural Development, 1909 Vicki Lane Suite 103 Norfolk, Neb. 68701, (402) 371-5350; Cliff Kumm or Deb Yocum, USDA Rural Development, 201 No. 25th Beatrice, Neb. 68310, 402-223-3125 ext. 4.

- May 19th: O'Neill-9:00 a.m. Holt Co. Court House Annex, 128 N. 6th; Ainsworth-1:00 p.m. Ainsworth Community Center, Highway 20; Valentine-7:00 p.m. Peppermill, 112 No. Main.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting Mary Gambill, USDA Rural Development, 731 E. 4th Ainsworth, Neb. 69210, (402) 387-2242; Cliff Kumm or Deb Yocum, USDA Rural Development, 201 No. 25th Beatrice, Neb. 68310, 402-223-3125 ext. 4.

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- May 20th: Chadron-9 a.m. MT Country Kitchen Banquet Room 1250 W. 10th St.; Alliance-1 p.m. MT Alliance 1st National Bank, Community Room, 124 W. 3rd; Scottsbluff-7 p.m. MT Platte Valley National Bank, Prairie Room, 2nd Floor (enter on North side at 1212 Circle Drive).
- May 21st: Sidney-1 p.m. MT Security First Bank, Community Room, 2nd Floor 1205 Jackson St.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting Tim Brooks, USDA Rural Development, 818 Ferdinand Plaza, Suite B, Scottsbluff, Neb. 69361, (308) 632-2195; Cliff Kumm or Deb Yocum, USDA Rural Development, 201 No. 25th Beatrice, Neb. 68310, 402-223-3125 ext. 4.

- May 25th: Lexington-9:30 a.m. Grand Generation Center, 407 East 6th St.; McCook-1:30 p.m. McCook Community College, Tipton Hall Mini Theater, Room 4, 402 East M; Ogallala-7 p.m. MT Ogallala Housing Authority, Community Room, 1701 East 2nd.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting Karissa Hagedorn, USDA Rural Development, Rm. 152 Federal Building, 100 Centennial Mall North, Lincoln, Neb. 68508, (402) 437-5735; Beth Fries, USDA Rural Development, 1202 S. Cottonwood, North Platte, Neb. 69101, (308) 534-2360; Cliff Kumm or Deb Yocum, USDA Rural Development, 201 No. 25th Beatrice, Neb. 68310, 402-223-3125 ext. 4.

- May 26th: York-9 a.m. County Extension Office 2345 Nebraska Avenue; Beatrice-7 p.m. County Extension Office, 115 West Scott.
- May 27th: Nebraska City-9:30 a.m. Otoe County Bank, Lower Level Meeting Room, 911 Central Ave.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting Jan Knobel, Cliff Kumm or Deb Yocum, USDA Rural Development, 201 No. 25th Beatrice, Neb. 68310, (402) 223-3125 ext. 4.

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USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to USDA, Director, OCR, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.