



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**\$14.9 MILLION IN GRANTS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST  
COMMUNITIES WITH HIGH ENERGY COSTS**

**Lincoln, Neb., December 23-** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced the availability of \$14.9 million in the first round of competitive grants under the High Energy Cost Community Grant program. Grants are available for improvement of energy generation, transmission, and distribution facilities serving communities with extremely high-energy costs.

To be eligible for grant funds, you must be an eligible applicant and the grant project must serve a community with average home energy costs exceeding 275 percent of the national average under one or more of the RUS benchmarks outlined in the Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA). Additionally, the proposed project must improve energy generation, transmission, or distribution facilities serving an eligible community, and administrative costs of the project must not exceed four percent of the grant funds. The maximum amount for a grant request that will be considered for funding under this notice is \$5,000,000 with a minimum amount of \$75,000.

Eligible applicants include: legally-organized for-profit or nonprofit organizations such as, but not limited to, a corporation, association, partnership (including a limited liability partnership), cooperative, or trust; a sole proprietorship; a State or local government, or any agency or instrumentality of a State or local government, including a municipal utility or public power authority; an Indian tribe, a tribally-owned entity, an Alaska Native Corporation; or an individual or group of individuals.

Energy projects eligible for grant funds consist of those used for the acquisition, construction, installation, repair, replacement, or improvement of energy generation, transmission, or distribution facilities in communities with extremely high energy costs. On-grid and off-grid renewable energy projects, and energy efficiency, and energy conservation projects are eligible.

Applications must be postmarked or delivered to RUS by Friday, February 7, 2003 at: Rural Utilities Service U.S. Department of Agriculture 1400 Independence Avenue, SW STOP 1522, Room 4034-South Building Washington, DC 20250-1522. Applications should be marked "Attention: High Energy Cost Community Grant Program."

All timely and complete applications will be reviewed and ranked by an RUS rating panel according to the evaluation criteria set out in the NOFA. The Rural Utilities Service Administrator will award grants in rank order.

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-2-

The Application Guide along with the Federal Register that announced the Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) can be found at the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/electric/hecgp/index.htm>. If there are any differences between the Application Guide and the requirements in the NOFA, the NOFA provisions will govern. Application guides and additional information may also be requested from Karen Larsen, Management Analyst, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, Electric Program, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 1560, Room 4037 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1560; 202-720-9545-phone; 202-690-0717-fax; email: [HEnergy02@rus.usda.gov](mailto:HEnergy02@rus.usda.gov).

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