



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA SELECTS RECIPIENTS FOR \$19.9 MILLION IN HIGH ENERGY COST GRANTS

WASHINGTON, May 30, 2008 — Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr today announced that 17 organizations have been selected to receive \$19.9 million to help rural residents and businesses become more energy efficient. The funds are being awarded through USDA Rural Development's High Energy Cost Grant program.

"These grants will help home and business owners offset rising energy costs by financing energy efficiency and infrastructure improvements that are needed to deliver energy in the most cost effective way," Dorr said.

Funds may be used to acquire, construct, extend, upgrade or otherwise improve energy generation, transmission or distribution facilities serving communities in which the average residential cost for home energy exceeds 275 percent of the national average. Grants are available to individuals, businesses, non-profit entities, states, local governments and federally recognized Indian tribes. They may not be used to pay utility bills or to purchase fuel. Grant funds also may not be used for the sole benefit of the applicant.

Among the projects selected this year is a planned wind turbine and control system for the existing diesel generating plant serving the community of Kokhanok, Alaska. The wind-diesel system, to be constructed with a \$999,227 grant, is expected to save the community an estimated \$100,000 a year in fuel costs. Pioneer Electric Cooperative in Greenville, Ala., has been selected to receive \$792,000 to expand a weatherization and energy efficiency program aimed at improving the dwellings of low-income homeowners in four counties. Customers already assisted under the program report energy savings of up to 50 percent. In Kentucky, Jackson Energy Cooperative Association has been selected to receive \$999,996 to improve

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energy efficiency and weatherize an estimated 148 homes, generating energy savings of up to 30 percent.

Funding for individual recipients is contingent upon their meeting the conditions of the grant agreement. A complete list of the grant recipients is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$90 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.7 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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