



A Program of the Maine Public Utilities Commission

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NEWS RELEASE

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\$4.8 Million Awarded to Maine Towns for Energy Efficiency

Augusta, Maine—Just last week, the Maine Public Utilities Commission's Efficiency Maine program awarded grants totaling \$4.8 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars to 87 Maine communities around the state for energy efficiency improvements. These funds provide an opportunity for Maine cities and towns to obtain support for energy use planning, for "shovel-ready" projects that previously could not be funded, or for launching early steps of projects that promise long-term energy savings and greenhouse gas reductions. Projects include municipal weatherization work, solar and wind installations, energy audits and planning activities.

Commission Chair Sharon Reishus noted, "The Commission recognizes that towns and cities can lead by example in energy efficiency projects. With the financial support made possible by ARRA, these towns can now demonstrate innovative solutions to energy challenges and support clean energy businesses in Maine."

The projects which received grants are predominantly weatherization and heating system retrofits at existing municipal buildings, but towns also received grants to install solar hot water systems and wind turbines, conduct building energy audits and establish new, innovative residential weatherization programs which will be structured to complement Efficiency Maine's state-wide Home Weatherization Program. The Commission also awarded "template" grants to 36 towns to support community energy planning initiatives. The qualifying projects all support the state's energy goals by reducing peak electric energy use, consumption of fossil fuels, and greenhouse gas emissions, and by building private sector jobs in the clean energy sector.

The grants are part of the Commission's Federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant, which can be used by municipalities and county governments to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. The program is being funded for the first time with federal stimulus spending under ARRA. In November 2009, the Commission was awarded approximately \$9.6 million in Block Grant funds from U.S. Department of Energy of which approximately \$5.8 million has been set aside for local units of government. The Commission anticipates that a second round of application requests will go out to bid in early March for the remaining \$1 million in grants.

For more information, see project spreadsheet below.

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