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Walthill will see reduction in costs with street lights

The new lights that are currently being installed on Walthill streets will not only brighten up the community at night, but will be a welcome relief to the village's wallet to the tune of an estimated 50 percent savings in energy consumption.

Work began last week to replace 20 lights on Main Street and 120 residential lights in Walthill. The current 400-watt high pressure sodium lights on main street will be replaced with LED lights that give off the same illumination but require only 107 watts to power, according to community volunteer Rita Dunn of rural Walthill, who wrote the grant to make this project possible.

Walthill received a total of \$140,508.40 through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, which is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the State of Nebraska's Department of Energy.

The 175-watt mercury vapor lights that brighten the residential streets are being replaced with LED lights that require only 72 watts.

With the updated lights in the village, electrical consumption will result in a savings of 1.150 Kilowatt tons (Kwt) per day and 419,750 Kwt per year, which equals to an annual greenhouse emission savings of 301 metric tons.

Another part of the energy project will begin later this summer when the glass windows at the city office are replaced with thermo-paned glass windows. In addition, the front exterior building of the city office and library will be weatherized.

The last project will be funded in part by \$7,662.40 from the energy grant. The village will match \$1,915.60. With the light project, Walthill had to match \$33,211.

Henry Johnson of Allen, a

retired city crew supervisor for Walthill, is the project manager.

In all, 121 cities and counties applied for \$12,604,637 in grants for 218 projects totaling \$19,218,134. With only \$8,634,150 available to grants, 96 projects received funding.



Rand Shadbolt of SWT Energy in Lincoln installs one of the light fixtures in Walthill. The window and weatherization projects will begin later this summer as contracts are in the final stages.

Photography: Dean Ross