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96 CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS RECEIVE \$8.796 MILLION FOR 176 ENERGY SAVING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

LINCOLN – Ninety-six municipal and county governments in Nebraska will receive \$8.796 million from the Nebraska Energy Office for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant projects as part of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*. Applicants are providing \$3.968 million in matching funds. In total, \$12.764 million will be spent on the 176 projects selected.

The projects selected vary in size and scope, but are primarily building retrofit or street and traffic lighting projects. Maximum grant awards, \$250,000, are going to **Cuming, Harlan and Red Willow Counties** and **Holdrege, Lexington, Superior and Wayne**. The smallest grant, \$198, is for a lighting project in **Clay County**. The only renewable energy grant, \$82,360, is a 20 kilowatt wind turbine in **Banner County**. Some communities will have multiple projects funded: **Aurora** (6), **Chadron** (8), **Fairfield** (5), **Frontier County** (5), **Nebraska City** (5), **Pilger** (5) and **South Sioux City** (9). A complete list of grants, dollar amount, matching funds and project details is at <http://www.neo.ne.gov/grants/documents/2010EECBGList.pdf>.

More than \$12.6 million in grant funds had been requested by the 121 applicants. Out of 208 projects submitted, 176 were selected for funding. More than 87 percent of municipal projects were funded and more than 76 percent of county projects were funded.

Project applications were evaluated based on U.S Department of Energy guidelines including energy and greenhouse gas savings and were ranked on the overall score of the application, simple payback of the project and bonus points based on the amount of energy saved per grant dollars spent. Applicants competed in four categories: counties, first class cities, second class cities and villages. Application evaluations were performed by the Energy Office and Lincoln Electric System engineers with final approval by the U.S Department of Energy.

The Nebraska Energy Office was created in 1977 to promote the efficient, economic and environmentally responsible use of energy. It is an authoritative voice and comprehensive resource center for energy issues in the State of Nebraska. In addition, the energy office plays an important role in fostering new growth in our renewable energy industry and helping Nebraska lead the way in the new clean energy economy. For more information, please visit www.neo.ne.gov.