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STATE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS TO BE BENCHMARKED BY 2020

Nebraska Energy Office Receives Federal Dollars for Initiative

LINCOLN – With the assistance of a \$300,000 cooperative agreement from the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), the Nebraska Energy Office will start work on a goal to have all Nebraska state government buildings benchmarked by 2020. The *Nebraska Initiative-Benchmarking & Beyond* (NIBB), will include a state building benchmarking policy, training for building operators, building energy use data collection and benchmarking training for university interns and high school Science Technology Engineering & Math (STEM) teachers and their students.

As part of the NIBB, the Energy Office will partner with the University of Nebraska –Lincoln (UNL) and train university students to collect energy use data from Nebraska state government buildings and enter that information into ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. The Portfolio Manager program is an online tool designed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to measure and track energy and water consumption, as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

The Energy Office will collaborate with other stakeholders to coordinate a work-force development training component of the project that will provide a Building Operator Certification (BOC) program for facility managers to inventory state buildings. The BOC program is run through the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA) and is a competency-based training and certification program, focused on providing energy-saving operational strategies for maintenance and operations staff and technicians. In addition, training will be provided to UNL student-interns and high school students and teachers to benchmark buildings using Portfolio Manager.

“This project is unique in the fact that not only will we be able to benchmark state buildings to find areas in energy use that can be reduced, but building operators will be given the tools and training necessary to reduce those energy costs,” said Nebraska Energy Office Director David Bracht. “We’ll also be educating the next generation about the importance of benchmarking in the use of reducing energy waste.”

This first step of establishing an energy efficiency baseline will lead to a state-wide policy of annual benchmarking for all state buildings and voluntary participation by local governments receiving state aid.

Other stakeholders and participants in the NIBB include the League of Nebraska Municipalities, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Nebraska Association of County Officials, Community Energy Alliance, Nebraskans for Solar, Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Green Schools Program, Nebraska Department of Administrative Services and the Nebraska Public Power District.

This initiative reflects Governor Pete Ricketts work to reduce state government spending by identifying areas where energy efficiency measures can help reduce energy costs. It also will further the Energy Office’s mission to “promote the efficient, economic and environmentally responsible use 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, and plays an important role in fostering new growth in our renewable energy industry. For more information, please visit www.neo.ne.gov. Join the Energy Office on [Facebook](#) and follow on [Twitter](#).