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Contact: Public Affairs Specialist

Kelly Clark, 775.887.1222 x 130

kelly.clark2@nv.usda.gov

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Contact: Kelly Clark/Special Projects/Public Affairs Specialist

(775) 887-1222 x130

USDA Invites Rural Small Businesses and Agricultural Producers to Apply for Rural Energy for America Program Funds

Program Supports Renewable Energy Systems or Energy Efficiency Improvements (CARSON CITY –April 2, 2013) – USDA Rural Development Energy Coordinator Mark Williams is reminding rural small businesses and agricultural producers that funds are now available to help them improve energy efficiency or install renewable energy systems. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) remains focused on carrying out its mission, despite a time of significant budget uncertainty. Today’s announcement is one part of the Department’s efforts to strengthen the rural economy.

“This Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) funding will help owners of small rural businesses, farmers, and ranchers reduce energy consumption and conserve natural resources,” said Williams, Energy Coordinator for USDA Rural Development. “Through this program, farmers and agricultural producers can upgrade or replace outdated, inefficient systems in their operations, which may help them improve their bottom line.”

REAP, authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (Farm Bill) is designed to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet the Nation's critical energy needs. USDA is accepting the following applications:

- Renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement grant applications and combination grant and guaranteed loan applications until *April 30, 2013*;

- Renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement guaranteed loan only applications until *July 15, 2013*;
- Renewable energy system feasibility study grant applications through *April 30, 2013*.

More information on how to apply for funding is available in the [March 29, 2013 Federal Register](#), pages 19183-19190. For more information contact Mark Williams, Energy Coordinator at (775) 887-1222, Ext. 116.

Eligible projects include installing renewable energy systems such as wind turbines, solar, geothermal, biomass, anaerobic digesters, hydroelectric or hydrogen systems. Funding may also be used to purchase energy-efficient equipment, add insulation, and improve heating and cooling systems.

USDA has made a concerted effort to deliver results for the American people, even as USDA implements sequestration – the across-the-board budget reductions mandated under terms of the Budget Control Act. USDA has already undertaken historic efforts since 2009 to save more than \$700 million in taxpayer funds through targeted, common-sense budget reductions. These reductions have put USDA in a better position to carry out its mission, while implementing sequester budget reductions in a fair manner that causes as little disruption as possible.

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