**USDA Rural Development**

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to help rural Americans improve the quality of their lives. Our programs create or preserve rural jobs, build and update rural infrastructure (including facilities for health care, education, and public safety), and create or improve more than 60,000 units of quality rural housing. To multiply the impact of our programs, we work with State, local and tribal governments, as well as private and nonprofit organizations and producer-and user-owned cooperatives.

We have three main program areas: Rural Housing Programs which includes single and multi-family housing programs/repair and Community Facilities; Rural Utilities Programs including electric, telecommunications and water and wastewater programs. Our funding for electric and telecommunications infrastructure services includes renewable energy projects, smart grid technology, and broadband; and Rural Business Programs which invests financial resources and technical assistance to create jobs and stimulate economic activity.

The Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP) is administered through our Rural Business Programs. It provides loan guarantees and grants to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase and install renewable energy systems (RES) and make energy-efficiency improvements (EEI). Renewable energy systems include those that generate energy from wind, solar, geothermal, hydrogen, ocean waves, hydroelectric, biomass, and biofuel.

Under the RES and EEI programs grants up to 25% of the eligible project cost can be awarded; the guaranteed loan program provides 60-85% loan guarantees on loans up to $25 million.

Tribal business entities formed as Section 17 corporations, as determined by the Secretary of Interior, or other tribal business entities that have similar structures and relationships with their tribal governments (as determined by Rural Development) are eligible for REAP grants. They must still meet the SBA’s small business size standards set by the North American Industry Classification (NAICS).

Information about USDA Rural Development REAP grants can be found at

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-renewable-energy-systems-energy-efficiency>. The phone number for the Arizona State Office Rural Business Programs staff is 602-280-8715.

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