



Deb Anderson of the Wyoming USDA Rural Development Office in Sheridan, Wyoming administers the REAP Grant to qualifying rural businesses. Also pictured is a 27 kW Pole Mounted Photovoltaic system in Wyoming that received the REAP Grant.

Debra Anderson - Sheridan USDA Office (December, 2017)

The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) assists rural small businesses and agricultural producers in increasing energy efficiency and utilizing renewable energy through the provision of grants and loans. Debra Anderson, Energy Coordinator for the program in Wyoming, explains how it works:

I am the Energy Coordinator at the Sheridan USDA Rural Development office. I am the person who applications for REAP will be submitted to. In my role, I help my applicants fill out the documents – so there would not be a need for them to hire anyone to do that.

I have been working this program for almost four years now, and it has been growing every year. To date, we have had ample funding in-state to fund all of the applications received. It appears that this year may be the first year where all of our funding is spent. If we do not spend all of our monies allocated, those funds go back to National Office and are pooled to cover projects competing in a national office competition.

All applicants would need to have a Dun & Bradstreet number and then register in the System for Award Management as part of the application process. Depending on the type of project, there may be other requirements. I discuss requirements with applicants when they come in. I recommend that anyone (small business or ag producer) interested in the program, contact me and discuss their specific project. At that time we will discuss the application process going forward. Small businesses and Ag Producers can apply.

Our funding is divided into two separate pools of money; one for those with total project costs of \$80,000 or less and the other for those with total project costs of over \$80,000. Historically in the \$80,000 or less category, we receive approximately \$120,000. In the over \$80,000 category, we historically receive approximately \$320,000. The grant can cover 25% of eligible project costs. The eligible costs include soft costs such as labor, shipping, taxes, fees, etc.

Grantees have two years to complete the project (most are finished long before that time). There is a semi-annual (twice a year) report due until the project is complete. The semi-annual reporting keeps us apprised of the progress of the project to ensure that it is proceeding as planned. Once the project is complete, there are annual reports due (two annual reports for energy efficiency projects and three annual reports for renewable energy projects). The annual reporting is basically a document showing the amount of energy saved or produced in that year.

We take applications at any time but there are funding/competition deadlines. For the projects under \$80,000 there are two (one is the end of October and the other is either the end of March or April; it has varied). The projects over \$80,000 just have one deadline (either the end of March or April).

The only “cap” on how many businesses can apply is the amount of annual funding we receive. If all of our state-allocated funds have been exhausted, then we could submit the application for National competition. In that case it would compete nationally for any funding that may be available there.