

State Energy Program and  
Energy Efficiency and Conservation  
Block Grant Program

Communications Resource Kit

March 2011



### Preface

Your grant award represents a historic investment in America's clean energy future. Should you choose to do so, this resource kit is designed to help you draw attention to the State Energy Program (SEP) and Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) projects you developed and showcase the economic recovery made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Whether a project reduces operating costs, develops manufacturing capacity, improves building energy performance, produces clean energy, enhances environmental performance, or delivers some combination of these and other benefits, grant recipients have good news to share about how projects create jobs and how investments in the local economy are making concrete improvements in people's lives. This toolkit offers guidance on how to effectively tell stories about the projects that employed citizens in states and local communities while transforming the future of energy in the United States to ensure clean, reliable and affordable energy for future generations.





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## 1. Introduction

Your grant award from the U.S. Department of Energy's State Energy Program (SEP) or Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) represents an important part of the nation's historic investments in our clean energy future, made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA or Recovery Act; Pub. L. No. 111-5). This Resource Kit offers guidance on how to help ensure the projects created from this funding receive the local, state and perhaps national attention they deserve. The framework is here; you and your team just need to fill in the details and add your own creative spark.

## 2. Best Practices for Information Sharing with DOE

For information about sharing project-related communications with DOE, please see Appendix C ("Technical Assistance to Grantees under the State Energy Program (SEP) and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG) Regarding Communications about Funded Programs").

Here, in brief, are best practices for information sharing with your DOE Project Officers:

- Send photos of your project;
- Send advance notification of planned events;
- Send press releases as they are prepared by including Project Officers on distribution lists; and
- Send a monthly summary of press coverage.

## 3. Best Practices for Use of the Technical Assistance Program Blog

The DOE Technical Assistance Program (TAP) Blog offers the opportunity to share ideas and best practices among SEP and EECBG grantees. Learn about the projects of other DOE grantees and what your counterparts are doing to tell their stories. The TAP Blog is a place to learn from other DOE grantees and share your ideas. Content can be submitted online through the blog.

## 4. Working with the Press

To develop and maintain a successful relationship with the press, consider the constraints under which they work. Newspaper staffing levels have declined 40 percent since 2000, which means reporters have to cover more ground, work faster, and look for efficiencies whenever possible.

This offers a golden opportunity to newsmakers who know how to make it easy for a reporter to tell their story and who can take advantage of developing new media opportunities. Following are four tips for working with the press:

- 1. Begin by knowing the story you want to tell.** Whatever the details, it's a story about achievement. It's about how your office, working with the DOE State Energy Program/Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, has positively impacted the local community, invested in the energy infrastructure and taken one more step toward a clean energy economy. It may be a story largely about jobs or reducing expenditures through lower energy costs or new opportunities made possible through renewable energy. Get clarity on your story, because everything else will flow from that:
  - [Company] is adding more than ten times its current solar manufacturing capacity and expects to double or triple its workforce with the expansion, which is funded by [dollar amount] in Recovery Act tax credits.
  - [County] in [State] is using Recovery Act funding to resynchronize 23 traffic signals at five major segments of roadway, which will save nearly 729,000 gallons of gas and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by more than 2,200 metric tons while reducing driving time.
  - [Grant recipient] has doubled the number of homes it weatherizes and quadrupled its contractor pool thanks to [dollar amount] in Recovery Act funds. The state has added 500 new weatherization employees since 2009 and has weatherized 2,900 homes using the first half of Recovery Act funds.
  - [City, State] netted [dollar amount] in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for a woodchip-fired combined heat and power system, which will help build a 1.8 million kWh-generating plant that will heat the city's schools, City Hall and as many as 150 other buildings in the downtown area. The plant runs off locally grown, sustainably harvested wood chips, and the city estimates as many as 35 new jobs will be created as a result of this project.

**2. Develop an attention-grabbing headline and elevator pitch.** The media responds to news items that are the first, the biggest or involve large statistics like money, so frame your news items accordingly:

- [Company] Manufacturing Capacity Grows Ten-Fold, Workforce Expected to Double
- [County's] Traffic Signal Overhaul to Reduce Gas Use, Drive Time
- [Agency] Doubles Number of Homes Weatherized, Creates 500 Jobs
- [City's] Woodchip-Fired Plant to Warm Downtown, Create Jobs
- Efficient Lighting Retrofit to Save State Hospitals \$1.2 Million
- [State] Public Schools Get First Solar Energy System.
- [County] Makes Energy Efficient Upgrades, Saves \$4 Million
- [Town] Getting [dollars] to Make Waste into Energy

An elevator pitch is a concise and attention-grabbing description of your story that can be told in the time it takes to ride an elevator.

- [Company] is using Recovery Act funds to grow its manufacturing capacity ten-fold and expects to at least double its workforce.
- The county is using Recovery Act funds to ease congestion through traffic signal improvements, which will save a lot of gas and make the air cleaner while getting everyone home faster.
- We've doubled the number of homes we weatherize, added 500 employees and put a lot of local vendors to work through our Recovery Act funding.
- Our new plant will keep the schools and other downtown buildings warm while running on woodchips that are sustainably harvested right here—and it'll put about 35 people to work, too.
- The county's new parking lot lighting will save around \$6,000 annually, while offering brighter light with fewer lighting poles.
- The state's more than 200 new hybrid diesel school buses are more than 60% more fuel efficient than traditional vehicles.
- The city rolled out a bikeshare program with support from the Recovery Act, and it's now the largest program of its kind in the country.

**3. Work with the media on their terms.** Remember the 40 percent media staff cuts? To get your message through, you'll need to anticipate reporters' information needs and be as responsive as possible. It means providing carefully prepared background materials, being accessible, exercising restraint, and keeping a sense of humor.

- 4. Stay flexible.** While your story may be crystal clear to you, journalists answer to editors, who may be exploring a different angle from what you have in mind. While you can't control the story or press, you can earn the trust and respect of key journalists by becoming a resource to them on clean energy technologies. Keep your interactions positive and focus on relationship-building.

## 5. Press Releases

Issue a press release to mark major milestones in your project. What makes the grade as a “major milestone?” Typically, a groundbreaking or similar kick-off at the beginning of your project, and project completion are valid occasions for a press release, though depending on the nature of your project, there may be others.

When you send out a press release to your local media, it's competing with hundreds, maybe even thousands, of other press releases. To stand out in the clutter, refer to the sample press release in the Appendix, and follow these best practices:

- **Be relevant, be accurate.** Above all else, your story needs to be newsworthy. Whenever possible, tie your story to a current event or trend related to energy efficiency, renewable energy or jobs to make it more relevant. Include a quote from the head of the state energy office that underscores why the story is important. Double and triple check your facts.
- **Cover your bases.** Check that you haven't forgotten anything critical to the story. The simple checklist is: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. Ask yourself these questions to ensure nothing is overlooked.
- **Headlines matter.** Put effort into writing a headline for your press release that's both catchy and clear. A poor headline can bury even a great story, so give it the time it deserves. Reading the headline should tell editors and reporters exactly what your story is about—and leave them wanting to know the details. Clarity and brevity are key. Headlines should generally be no longer than seven words. Consider including a sub-headline if length is a problem.
- **Focus.** Keep your press release as focused as possible by keeping to one main topic. Anything else that distracts from that message should be eliminated. If you're having difficulty with this, ask yourself if there ought to be two press releases—but always set a high bar for newsworthiness. Sending out releases that have no news value is a bad idea; your more important stories run the risk of being overlooked because the journalist automatically tosses your releases.

- **Be brief.** Keep the release short and punchy and keep in mind your media audience is pressed for time. The first paragraph should include only two or three sentences and summarize the whole story with further details coming later in the release. Try to keep releases to one page of main text if possible, or two at the most.
- **Get approval.** If you mention any third party in your release, be sure to get written consent.
- **Be error-free.** Don't send out a press release that has typos or other errors. Proofread the release carefully before sending it out and let a few different people proofread it. Fresh eyes make it easier for little mistakes to get noticed and corrected.
- **Follow the standard conventions.** Produce your press release on letterhead with the standard organization logo at the top and the words Press Release (or similar) printed clearly on it. Date the press release. Include a contact name of someone who will be available for further comment and who knows about the story. Include your office's standard "boilerplate," a description of the office and its activities, including a web address, as well as the SEP/EECBG boilerplate provided in the Communications Technical Assistance (Appendix C). This information should appear on all material sent to the press. Normally it is one or two paragraphs in length.

### Targeting Your Press Release

Develop a list of media contacts from outlets that cover stories related to energy if you have not already, and update it regularly. The people on your distribution list to whom you send your press release are often just as important as the content of your release. Irrelevant pitches are an editor's pet peeve. Only send your press release to news outlets that regularly cover stories like yours. Wherever possible, target your list to staff journalists who you know have an interest in the subject. Newspaper reporters typically have "beats" or specialized areas on which they write, making them experts on certain issues such as economics, politics or energy. Develop a press list that targets the appropriate beat reporters for local newspapers, local television stations, local radio outlets, web sites, as well as community publications.

Note that a press release should not be sent until the time of your media event, if you are planning to have one. See Section Seven, "Guide to Planning a Newsworthy Event," for more information.

While a targeted press release email distribution list is important, your web site is the best tool to share your message. Here you have the space to tell your complete

story, which should include photos, fact sheets and illustrative graphics. Link your press release to these supplemental materials to make it easy for the press to understand the context and background of your project.

It is acceptable to call a journalist to confirm that they received your press release. However, refrain from calling to ask if the story from your press release will be published. Offer to answer any questions a journalist might have so they recognize you as a valuable resource.

If a journalist should call for further comment based on a press release, keep in mind they are usually working on a deadline. If you do not have answers readily available, say so and follow up at an agreed-upon time with factual, accurate information in a return phone call or by email, working as quickly as you can to gather the requested information so the journalist can meet the deadline.

## 6. Photography

Your story is visual. Who are the beneficiaries of the project, and how can you tell their story in visual terms?

- **Start by deciding what you want the photo to do.** How can it demonstrate your project's impact?
- **Highlight your project's best feature.** Think about how the physical structure—whether it's a weatherized building, a wind turbine, or a new boiler—can help carry the message. Photograph equipment before, during and after installation. Show it in use and, if possible, when its impact is evident.
- **Emphasize people.** People bring meaning to your project. If you have a lighting retrofit in a public building, for example, take photos of the people in that building, well lit by the new lighting. Photos of a solar project at a school could include children and teachers learning about photovoltaics.
- **Stay alert to possibilities.** The environment in which your project exists is constantly changing, and the way the project's beneficiaries will interact with the project may change, too—or perhaps the beneficiaries will expand to include new groups. A tree-planting project to reduce building cooling costs, for example, could offer new photographic opportunities long after its completion; an image of the maturing trees could be an effective visual to link to a follow-up story about volunteers educating others in the community on the benefits of trees. Be watchful for opportunities to capture visually the unfolding story of your project.

### **Sharing Your Photos with the Press**

The best way to share your photos with the press is through your website. Be very selective and feature only your best photo or photos that really tell a story, with captions that describe the impact of your project. For larger projects, be prepared to offer high-resolution images to reporters who may request them, and also be ready to grant access to media who want to capture their own images.

You'll want to consider the timing in making images available on your web site. Don't get ahead of yourself. If you've hit a milestone, be sure you have an appropriate fact sheet or press release available on your site along with the images.

(Don't forget to share your best images with your DOE Project Officers, with appropriate background information. DOE is a resource to help amplify your project impact.)

## **7. Guide to Planning a Newsworthy Event**

The launch and completion of your project are prime opportunities to celebrate your goals and draw attention to the work you are doing. Several factors will play a role in your determination to host an event. These should include timing, the size of your project and its net impact (or potential impact) on the community. This impact may be economic, social or both.

### **The Right Climate for an Event**

To the greatest extent possible, you want to control the environment in which your event will unfold, with the goal of giving your story the highest level of exposure and a positive tone in news coverage. Be alert to elements in your local environment that might serve to undermine that goal. For example, if your office is struggling with roadblocks in project implementation, you may want to wait until you've addressed the challenges before moving forward with an event. Be sensitive to story trends to which your project might be linked. Timing, as they say, is everything.

### **Location, Structure and Participants**

Your project site will likely be the best venue to share your message with the public. The best format may be brief remarks followed by an open house or tour,

but that will depend on the nature of your project. Don't be afraid to get creative in your event format. Check the Technical Assistance Program Blog to learn what others have done.

When you've settled on your location and event structure, consider the following:

- **Who should be there to help develop the message?** Consider the community impact of your project. Would it be appropriate to include city, county or state elected officials either as speakers or as guests? What other community leaders should be included? Decide when they should be invited, who should invite them, and what role, if any, they should play in the public event.
- **Who are your audiences?** Are you targeting the staff and parents of children in a local school that has been retrofitted? Workers in a retooled plant? Participants in a green jobs training program? The general public? While you'll want to make the direct and indirect beneficiaries of your project the focus in your event, the local press is of utmost importance. See the sections below on preparing a media advisory and preparing for the press.
- **What is the best "stage" for the event?** Consider your location and the best way to arrange your event for visual impact. What backdrop best fits the message? This aspect may be more important than you initially imagine. Take the time to look through a camera's viewfinder to plan the photography before the event. Ensure sound amplification is available for the event and test it well in advance.
- **What resources can you leverage?** Consider coordinating your event with your NASEO Regional Coordinator and DOE Project Officers. Can they bring additional resources to your event? Do you have questions for DOE? Contact your Project Officers if you need answers.

### The Media Advisory

Your best tool for sharing the news of your upcoming event with the media is the media advisory, which is especially preferred by larger newspapers and TV stations. A sample media advisory can be found in the Appendix.

A media advisory serves as an invitation to your event for reporters. It provides the essential information: the event's purpose, location, date and time, as well as the planned speakers. It may also include other information relevant to them, such as where they can park and set up equipment prior to the event. The aim of the media

advisory is to have the event, or the information released during the event, covered by the news media.

The advisory should provide just enough detail for reporters to understand what's happening and the context, but not enough so that everything is given away in advance. How much background is provided will depend on how familiar reporters are with the subject, and whether there's a reason to hold back certain information before the event.

Many journalists like to know about news events in advance – generally a week or two ahead – so they can approve a story idea with their editors, schedule a photographer and do additional research. Issue your media advisory about a week before the event and again the day before. While you will also want to prepare a more informative press release, do not release it until the time of your event.

### **Event Photography**

Plan ahead of time the photographs you want to capture. Is it a literal ribbon-cutting? Who should be in the frame, and from what angle should the shot be taken? As you plan the agenda for your event, be sure to allow time for any important photos you wish to stage, and to communicate your plan to the subjects well in advance. Keep in mind that you are planning these photo opportunities for your own photographer to capture, as well as for attending press.

### **Preparing for the Press**

Press who attend your event are looking for two key things: access to key sources and detailed documentation. You can help assure that your story gets the attention it deserves by arranging to make your key speakers and experts available to the press during or immediately following your event. Go the extra mile to make these arrangements and provide a space for one-on-one interviews. Make sure your sources are well-equipped for these interviews and that the message they carry is consistent with your own.

All reporters like detailed written documentation – facts, figures, anecdotes, graphics, and examples, such as press releases or media backgrounders – to bolster a story. Be prepared to substantiate statements made in your materials and provide sources. Giving reporters written material such as quotes and fact sheets increases the likelihood that a quote or fact will be reported accurately.

Direct interactions with the press require careful preparation. Share these guidelines with all spokespeople:

- Always tell the truth. Your credibility and reputation depend on honesty and accuracy.
- Admit it if you don't know the answer to a question. Offer to get the answer, and do so as quickly as you can.
- Correct mistakes immediately. Explain that you didn't give an adequate answer, and you would like to clear up the confusion.
- Assume that everything you say is on the record. Always assume every camera and tape recorder is on and recording during every conversation.
- Focus on benefits to your community. Stay on message about the achievements of the project and its impact on the community.
- Don't use inappropriate language. "Inappropriate" refers to both jargon and strong language. Jargon gets in the way of understanding; opt for plain language. Strong language looks terrible in print.
- Be as open with the media as possible. Try to provide a response, and don't ignore inquiries.
- Keep a list of accomplishments and update it frequently. Things happen so quickly that it's sometimes easy to forget what your office has achieved if you don't write it down.
- Always return phone calls in time for reporters to meet deadlines.
- Try to get the information reporters want even if it means an extra effort, such as staying at work late or hand-delivering material.
- Don't improvise, don't speculate, and don't guess. Good reporters check facts.
- Never be deceptive—not in a headline, not in a press release, not in an in-person or phone interview. Avoid exaggeration. You are trading on your credibility.
- Keep a sense of humor.

### **Inaccuracies in the Press**

If a news outlet makes an error when reporting about your project, keep your cool and recognize that you've been handed an opportunity. Act quickly but be diplomatic when approaching the reporter or editor. Remember you are building relationships, so handling this well may pay off down the line. First thank him or her for the coverage, then point out the error and provide correct information.

If the article is web-based, the editor has the ability to go into the site and make a correction. Since inaccurate news can be accessed indefinitely on the Internet, requesting a correction would be the appropriate action. If it is a print publication, the error may warrant a mention on the Corrections page depending on its severity. In the case of television, critical errors can be corrected on air by a show's anchor or host.

### **Post Event: Extending the Impact**

Your web site is the best tool for extending the impact of your event. Make it a priority to post photographs and your press release as quickly as possible following the event. Distribute your press release to appropriate media outlets that did not attend the event and make sure your web address is listed on all press releases and media advisories.

### **A Word on Social Media**

Blogs, Twitter, YouTube and other social media outlets are popular supplements to direct press outreach, as they allow newsmakers to reach supporters who can do the work of raising awareness for a cause. Effective use of social media requires staffing and regular maintenance of your news stream. If your office is staffed in such a way that these tools are within your reach, take advantage of them to generate public interest about your events.

## **8. Media Briefings**

The first thing to know about media briefings is that they are usually not appropriate. Rather than attempting to devise something just for beleaguered reporters, it usually makes sense to invite them along to an event with a larger focus, such as your project unveiling, where they'll appreciate the authenticity.

Consider a media briefing only for news of statewide importance. It's an undertaking that may demand pooling of information resources with your colleagues across the state to identify trends and other benchmarks related to your project. Given broad information-sharing on these and similar measures, a media briefing can be a powerful tool to draw statewide attention to the impact of your clean energy projects.



## Sample Press Release

The following is a sample release that highlights a project completion. Change the details of the story to make the release appropriate for your project.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact:** [Media Contact Name]  
[Contact telephone/Cell Phone]  
[Contact e-mail address]

### **City Completes Recovery Act Project to Upgrade City Traffic Lights with Highly Efficient LEDs**

Project will save taxpayers money and create new jobs

[City, State], [date] - The City of Anytown announced today that it has completed its installation of highly efficient light emitting diodes (LED) bulbs in all 90,000 of the city's traffic lights. Last fall, Anytown received a \$3 million Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) under the Recovery Act from the U.S. Department of Energy. The funds were matched by a \$3 million rebate from ABC Company.

City Mayor Michael Smith announced the project at a traffic light unveiling at City Hall. He was joined by local and federal government officials, as well as representatives from ABC Company. Streets Department technicians were also on-hand to demonstrate the work that had been done.

Making the switch to LEDs will result in \$1 million in energy savings each year for the city. "We're saving the city money and setting an example for large urban cities," said Katherine Jones, Director of Sustainability for the City of Anytown.

"This project is one example of thousands of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects being undertaken by communities across America," said U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "It is helping to change the way we produce and consume energy, revitalizing our economy, and creating a new generation of clean energy jobs."

Make sure the contact is both available and knowledgeable.

Try not to use acronyms in the headline or quotes. If necessary, as in LEDs, include other qualifiers to help make it more understandable.

Get the benefit into the headline.

Physical location (state, city), Month, Day, Year - A strong introductory paragraph captures the reader's attention and answers the "Five W's" of (W)ho, (W)hat, (W)hen, (W)here, and (W)hy, when applicable. This paragraph should summarize the News Release and include a hook to get your audience interested in reading more.

Move to more detailed information. Consider including quotes from key staff, customers or subject matter experts. Assure factual accuracy and correct grammar, and make sure you are cleared to use quotes or information about businesses.

Focus on results for your community.

Contextualize your project. It's part of a broader story.

Develop an angle that will grab the attention of journalists (often by connecting your release to current events or issues, such as jobs). Work with your Project Officer to see if it's appropriate to have a quote from Secretary Chu in your release.

## Appendix A: Sample Press Release

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The EECBG Program, funded for the first time by the Recovery Act, is a major investment in energy solutions that will strengthen America's economy, create jobs locally, and support the immediate use of the cheapest, cleanest, and most reliable energy technologies we have—energy efficiency and conservation. Learn more about the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program at:  
[www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html).

For more information about [Organization Name], contact [Organization Contact Person] at [telephone] or [e-mail address]. Also visit the [Organization Name] Web site, [URL].

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Include the DOE boilerplate language at the end of the release. Try to keep the press release to fewer than 500 words total. Remember, succinct and to the point works best.

Include a link to your web site. It's good practice to make available additional project resources, including fact sheets and photos, through your web site.

## Sample Media Advisory

### Media Advisory

**Contact:** [Media Contact Name]

[Contact telephone/Cell Phone]

[Contact Fax]

[Contact e-mail address]

**For:** [Date of Event]

### Mayor Michael Smith to Announce Milestone in Recovery Act Project to Upgrade City Traffic Lights

Grant money will improve the city's energy efficiency, create new jobs

**WHAT:** Press conference with Mayor Michael Smith to announce a milestone in the city's Recovery Act energy efficiency efforts

**WHO:** Mayor Michael Smith  
Congresswoman Jane Jones  
XXX, from U.S. Department of Energy  
XXX, from ABC Company

**WHEN:** 12 PM  
Thursday, January 25, 2011

**WHERE:** Front Steps, City Hall  
<Include address>

**RSVP:** To attend the event, please RSVP to XX at XX or XX.  
<Provide directions and parking information if relevant>

The EECBG Program, funded for the first time by the Recovery Act, is a major investment in energy solutions that will strengthen America's economy, create jobs locally, and support the immediate use of the cheapest, cleanest, and most reliable energy technologies we have—energy efficiency and conservation. Learn more about the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program at: [www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eecbg.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eecbg.html).

For more information about [Organization Name], contact [Organization Contact Person] at [telephone] or [e-mail address]. Also visit the [Organization Name] Web site, [URL].

####

Include date and contact information for event.

Get the benefit into the headline.

Provide essential information about the event. Determine what information to hold back for sharing at your event.

Include information on who will be attending and speaking.

By providing a contact name, phone number and email to RSVP, you will be able to gauge the press response before the event and make follow up calls as necessary.

Include DOE boilerplate at the bottom of the media advisory.

Include a link to your web site. While you will want to protect information that you plan to unveil at the event, It's good practice to make available other project resources and background, including fact sheets and photos, through your web site..





**Department of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 18, 2011

**SUBJECT: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO GRANTEES UNDER THE STATE ENERGY PROGRAM (SEP) and THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (EECBG) REGARDING COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT FUNDED PROGRAMS**

**1.0 PURPOSE:** Provides technical assistance to State Energy Program (SEP) and Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG) recipients that seek to post signage, engage in public communications or engage in outreach activities related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA or Recovery Act; Pub. L. No. 111-5).

**2.0 SCOPE:** This technical assistance is for entities (i.e., States and Territories) named in a grant award as the recipients of financial assistance under SEP and EECBG, and their subrecipients.

**3.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY:** SEP is authorized under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6321 et seq.). EECBG is authorized under Title V, Subtitle E of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA). All grant awards made under these programs shall comply with applicable law, including the Recovery Act, and other procedures applicable to these programs.

**4.0 DEFINITIONS**

***Funded project sites*** are locations of projects developed with SEP/EECBG financial assistance.

**Prime recipients** are non-Federal entities that receive Recovery Act funding as Federal awards in the form of grants directly from the Federal government. Federal agencies are not considered prime or subrecipients.

**Project implementation period** is the span of time from the beginning of a project to the completion of development, culminating with the project being brought online or into use.

**Subrecipient** means a non-Federal entity that expends Federal awards received from another entity to carry out a Federal program but does not include an individual who is a beneficiary of such a program. Specifically, subrecipients are non-Federal entities that are awarded Recovery Act funding through a legal instrument from the prime recipient to support the performance of any portion of the substantive project or program for which the prime recipient received the Recovery Act funding. Additionally, the terms and conditions of the Federal award are carried forward to the subrecipient.

### 5.0 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The following sections provide technical assistance for SEP/EECBG prime recipients and subrecipients who seek to:

1. Use Project Signage;
2. Reference DOE on prime recipient and subrecipient web sites;
3. Reference DOE on prime recipient and subrecipient printed materials;
4. Notify DOE of events; and
5. Issue and notify DOE of press releases.

### 5.1 PROJECT SIGNAGE

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Project announcement signage informs the public of the source of the project funds. However, prime recipients and subrecipients should consider excluding signage from the following locations:

- Single-family homes; and
- Projects with signage (indicating DOE and Recovery Act funding) already in place as of the release date of this document.

### 5.1.1. Project Announcement Signage

For prime recipients and subrecipients that seek to post project announcement signs, it is suggested that:

- Project announcement signage is posted within two weeks of project commencement, remains in place for the duration of the project implementation period and for one year following project completion.
- The sign is no smaller than 8 ½" x 11", printed in color in accordance with the Recovery Act logo use guidelines and posted prominently on the project/job site with appropriate protection from the elements at exterior sites.
- If the project is located at multiple sites (for example, commercial lighting retrofits), signs can be posted at each site, but consider at a minimum, posting at the central public facility of the agency overseeing implementation of the project.
- Sample DOE-designed project announcement signage is available in a variety of sizes for download on the DOE Technical Assistance website.

If a prime recipient or subrecipient chooses to include project specific information on any signage, the following suggestions are provided for consideration:

- Include information on the estimated energy savings or energy produced from the project.
- Include information on the cost of the project.
- Include the appropriate state seal.

### **5.2 REFERENCING DOE ON PRIME RECIPIENT AND SUBRECIPIENT WEBSITES**

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To inform the public of the source and purpose of the project funds, prime recipients and subrecipients that seek to reference DOE on their websites should consider using the following language regarding DOE:

#### SEP

"This project receives funding from the [U.S. Department of Energy's \(DOE\) State Energy Program](#), which is providing \$3.1 billion in [Recovery Act](#) funding to state energy offices to

implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects across the country. The State Energy Program helps states to address their energy priorities, while spurring economic growth and creating a new generation of clean energy jobs.”

The first reference to the DOE State Energy Program should include a hyperlink to the SEP homepage at: [www.eere.energy.gov/wip/sep.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/sep.html). The reference to the Recovery Act should include a hyperlink to: [www.eere.energy.gov/recovery/](http://www.eere.energy.gov/recovery/).

If a prime recipient or subrecipient chooses to include project specific information on a website, the following suggestions are provided for consideration:

- Include information on the estimated energy savings or energy produced from the project.
- Include information on the cost of the project.

### EECBG

“This project receives funding from the [U.S. Department of Energy’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program](#), which is helping U.S. cities, counties, states, territories and Indian tribes develop, promote and implement local energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, funded for the first time by the [Recovery Act](#), is a major investment in energy solutions that will strengthen America’s economy, create jobs locally and immediately deploy the cheapest, cleanest, and most reliable energy technologies we have—energy efficiency and conservation.”

The first reference to the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program should include a hyperlink to the EECBG homepage at [www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html). The reference to the Recovery Act should include a hyperlink to [www.eere.energy.gov/recovery/](http://www.eere.energy.gov/recovery/).

If a prime recipient or subrecipient chooses to include project specific information on a website, the following suggestions are provided for consideration:

- Include information on the estimated energy savings or energy produced from the project.
- Include information on the cost of the project.

### 5.3 REFERENCING DOE ON PRIME RECIPIENT AND SUBRECIPIENT PRINTED MATERIALS

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If a prime recipient or subrecipient seeks to inform the public of the source and purpose of the project funds on printed materials, the following language is provided as a sample:

#### SEP

“This project receives funding from the U.S. Department of Energy’s State Energy Program, which is providing funding to state energy offices to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. More information about the State Energy Program is available at:

[www.eere.energy.gov/wip/sep.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/sep.html).”

If a prime recipient or subrecipient chooses to include project specific information on printed materials, the following suggestions are provided for consideration:

- Include information on the estimated energy savings or energy produced from the project.
- Include information on the cost of the project.

#### EECBG

“This project receives funding from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, which is helping local communities to develop, promote and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. More information about the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program is available at:

[www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html).”

If a prime recipient or subrecipient chooses to include project specific information on printed materials, the following suggestions are provided for consideration:

- Include information on the estimated energy savings or energy produced from the project.
- Include information on the cost of the project.

### 5.4 NOTIFICATION OF EVENTS

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The following information is intended to assist prime recipients that seek to notify their DOE Project Officers upon confirming a venue for any event marking a milestone in the development

of a funded project site. Such events may include, but are not limited to, groundbreakings, ribbon-cuttings, media briefings, school openings and other facility openings. Notification to the DOE Project Officers should include:

- The name and purpose of the event;
- The date and time;
- The location;
- A description of the event program or agenda;
- Invited speakers; and
- Description of invited guests.

Recipients may, at their discretion, request DOE participation in a local event. However, the availability of DOE staff to participate in such events is extremely limited. Recipients are therefore advised to avoid making event plans contingent upon DOE participation.

### **5.5 PRESS RELEASES**

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#### 5.5.1 Issuing Press Releases

If a prime recipient or subrecipient seeks to inform the public of major project milestones, the inclusion of the following information should be considered.

- Total project cost;
- The energy produced and/or saved, if applicable;
- The number of jobs the project created, if applicable; and
- The savings the project will generate annually in dollars.

Milestones include groundbreakings, facility openings, and project completions.

#### 5.5.2 Referencing DOE in Press Releases

The sample language below is for prime recipients and subrecipients who seek to issue press releases and reference DOE in them:

For SEP:

“This project was made possible with a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy’s State Energy Program, through the state energy office. The DOE State Energy Program provides funding to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects across the country and help states to address their energy priorities, while spurring economic growth and creating a new generation of clean energy jobs. Learn more about the State Energy Program at [www.eere.energy.gov/wip/sep.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/sep.html).”

For EECBG:

“This project was made possible with a grant from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program, which is helping U.S. cities, counties, states, territories and Indian tribes develop, promote and implement local energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The EECBG Program, funded for the first time by the Recovery Act, is a major investment in energy solutions that will strengthen America’s economy, create jobs locally and immediately deploy the cheapest, cleanest, and most reliable energy technologies we have—energy efficiency and conservation. Learn more about the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program at: [www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/wip/eeecbg.html).”

### 5.5.3 Notification

Prime recipients who seek to notify the DOE Project Officer of press releases at the time of their issue may do so by placing the DOE Project Officer on the press release distribution list.

**PROGRAM NOTICE APPENDIX: Logo Use Guidelines**

**DOE Policy Regarding Recovery Act Recipient Use of Recovery Act Logos on Signage**

Interim Guidance: May 2010

[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/pdfs/doe\\_arra\\_signage\\_interim\\_guidance.pdf](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/pdfs/doe_arra_signage_interim_guidance.pdf)

**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: General Guidelines for Emblem and Logo Applications**

[http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/Recovery\\_emblem\\_guide\\_v1%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/Recovery_emblem_guide_v1%5B1%5D.pdf)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

Energy Efficiency &  
Renewable Energy

EERE Information Center

1-877-EERE-INFO (1-877-337-3463)

[www.eere.energy.gov/informationcenter](http://www.eere.energy.gov/informationcenter)