

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEPA DETERMINATION**



RECIPIENT: University of Central Florida

STATE: FL

PROJECT TITLE : Improving Energy Efficiency and Moisture Control Using Lower-Cost Construction Methods to Unvent Attics in Hot Humid Climates

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number
DE-FOA-0003158

Procurement Instrument Number
DE-EE0011576

NEPA Control Number
GFO-0011576-001

CID Number
GO11576

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), I have made the following determination:

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination

Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, site visits, and audits), data analysis (including, but not limited to, computer modeling), document preparation (including, but not limited to, conceptual design, feasibility studies, and analytical energy supply and demand studies), and information dissemination (including, but not limited to, document publication and distribution, and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring. (See also B3.1 of appendix B to this subpart.)

B3.6 Small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects

Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for smallscale research and development projects; conventional laboratory operations (such as preparation of chemical standards and sample analysis); and small-scale pilot projects (generally less than 2 years) frequently conducted to verify a concept before demonstration actions, provided that construction or modification would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible). Not included in this category are demonstration actions, meaning actions that are undertaken at a scale to show whether a technology would be viable on a larger scale and suitable for commercial deployment.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to The University of Central Florida to analyze and evaluate attic sealing methods using common insulating materials with the goal of reducing heating and cooling energy use in hot humid climates.

This project would be implemented over two Budget Periods (BPs). Budget Period 1 would consist of evaluating the effectiveness of retrofit attic sealing methods at an existing test facility, developing a construction retrofit procedure to be used in a field study, obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, and beginning pre-retrofit monitoring activities in 5 test homes. Budget Period 2 would consist of a pilot study in 18 test homes throughout the southern United States and would include analysis of retrofit impacts, identification of energy savings, and development of a retrofit method procedure. At this time, the locations of the test homes have not been determined and there is insufficient information to review BP2 activities. As such, this NEPA determination (ND) applies only to BP1. An additional NEPA review would be required for all activities listed under BP2.

Project management, data collection, analysis, reporting, and pilot testing would occur at The University of Central Florida's Flexible Roof Facility in Cocoa, Florida; project planning, review, reporting, and scheduling would occur at Owens Corning Corporate Office in Granville, Ohio; project planning and identification of test homes would occur at St. John's Housing Partnership in St. Augustine, Florida.

Project activities would involve typical hazards associated with attic insulation, including fall risks and exposure to fiberglass and cellulose insulating materials. Existing health and safety policies and procedures would be followed, including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, monitoring, and internal assessments. Additional policies and procedures would be implemented as necessary as new health and safety risks are identified. The University of Central Florida would observe all applicable federal, state, and local health, safety, and environmental regulations.

All project work would be performed at existing, purpose-built facilities. No modifications to existing facilities, ground disturbing activities, or changes to the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would be required. DOE does not anticipate any impacts to resources of concern due to the proposed award activities.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a conditional NEPA determination.

The NEPA Determination applies to the following Topic Areas, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

Budget Period 1

The NEPA Determination does not apply to the following Topic Area, Budget Periods, and/or tasks:

Budget Period 2

Notes:

Building Technologies Office (BTO)
NEPA review completed by Jason Spencer, 12/03/2024.

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D. To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

A portion of the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review. The NEPA Provision identifies Topic Areas, Budget Periods, tasks, and/or subtasks that are subject to additional NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:



Matthew Blevins

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date:

12/5/2024

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- ☒ Field Office Manager review not required
☐ Field Office Manager review required

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature:

Field Office Manager

Date: