

Colorado gets \$19.6 million stimulus

The money will go to the Governor's Energy Office to promote energy efficiency and renewable sources.

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With the approval of [Colorado's](#) plan for renewable-energy and efficiency projects, the state is receiving \$19.6 million in federal economic-stimulus money.

The funding, announced Monday by the [U.S. Department of Energy](#), is part of a total of \$49 million for energy projects Colorado is eligible for under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"What we are trying to do is not just one-time projects," said Todd Hartman, spokesman for the Governor's Energy Office. "We want to use the funds to build up infrastructure for energy efficiency and renewables."

The programs include financial incentives to builders to promote energy efficiency in new-home construction and to homeowners for energy efficiency in existing homes.

Another program would provide increased rebates for installing solar and wind systems.

There is also a revolving loan program and a financing program to help with business and residential energy investment.

"It's a very innovative plan," said Howard Geller, executive director of the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project, a nonprofit energy-advocacy group based in [Boulder](#).

Other states in the region are using the stimulus money for projects such as retrofitting state buildings and public schools, Geller said.

Although the Colorado plan has some of that, its emphases on consumer programs, promoting energy-efficient construction and financing are unique in the region, Geller said.

The programs will be operating by this fall, said Evan Dreyer, a spokesman for Gov. [Bill Ritter](#).

"We are excited the state is getting this money, but we are concerned about the time it may take to get to the end users," said Jim Welch, chief executive of Bella Energy, a Boulder-based solar-energy installer. "Everybody is holding back, waiting to see what is approved."

Colorado already has received about \$4.9 million for planning and will receive the remaining \$24.5 million after meeting reporting, oversight and accountability milestones, said Jen Stutsman, a DOE spokeswoman.

In addition to the \$49 million going to the Governor's Energy Office, Colorado is eligible for another \$52 million for county, city, tribal and school-district energy projects.

[Denver](#), for example, is eligible for \$6 million, said Scott Morrissey, deputy director of Greenprint Denver, the city's environmental agency.

Last month, the city filed a proposal to use half the money for energy retrofits on city buildings and half for community programs, Morrissey said.

The DOE has begun evaluating the city plans and will begin announcing grants later this summer, the department's Stutsman said.

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