



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project

Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

PRESS RELEASE

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For Further Information Contact:
Tom Potter: 303-503-2230
Howard Geller: 720-313-9337 x1

NEW REPORT DOCUMENTS LARGE ENERGY SAVINGS POTENTIAL IN RURAL AREAS OF THE SOUTHWEST

(Boulder, CO) – Rural areas are an important and growing portion of the southwest region. There is large potential for cost-effective energy efficiency improvements in rural areas according to **Rural Electric Efficiency Prospects**, a new report being issued today by the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP).

“The residential sector accounts for a greater fraction of electricity use in rural areas compared to urban areas,” said Tom Potter, author of the new report. “But fortunately there are a wide range of tried and true residential energy efficiency measures including better insulation, sealing leaks in the building envelope and air ducts, high efficiency heating and cooling equipment, ENERGY STAR appliances, and compact fluorescent lamps. Some of these measures require little or no up front cost; others do have a first cost. But all provide energy bill savings over their lifetime that far exceed any first cost,” Potter added.

“Rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities are the logical institutions to deliver energy efficiency services to residents, businesses, farms and ranches in rural areas,” said Howard Geller, Executive Director of SWEEP. “These not-for-profit entities were formed to act in the best interest of their customers. By implementing well-funded, comprehensive energy efficiency programs, rural electric co-ops and municipal utilities can help their customers cut their electricity use and their energy bills. Doing so will also reduce the need for costly and polluting new power plants, thereby protecting the environment and limiting increases in electricity rates in the future.”

Rural Electric Efficiency Prospects covers a variety of topics related to electricity use and energy efficiency potential in rural areas including:

- The social and economic context;
- How electricity is consumed in rural areas of the Southwest;
- Key energy efficiency measures and barriers to their adoption;
- Overall prospects for energy savings; and
- Utility program recommendations.

Copies of **Rural Electric Efficiency Prospects** are available on the SWEEP Web site at <http://www.swenergy.org/pubs/REEP.pdf>.



About SWEEP: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization that promotes greater energy efficiency in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. For more information, visit www.swenergy.org.