



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project
Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

PRESS RELEASE

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACT WILL HELP CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES IN NEW MEXICO SAVE MONEY

(Santa Fe, NM) -- The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) applauds the adoption of the Efficient Use of Energy Act. This new policy was passed nearly unanimously by the New Mexico State Legislature and was signed into law today by Governor Bill Richardson.

“This legislation will result in expanded utility energy conservation programs,” stated Howard Geller, Executive Director of SWEEP. “These programs in turn will help consumers and businesses reduce their energy consumption and energy bills. SWEEP estimates that the Act will save households and businesses in New Mexico \$765 million net over the lifetime of efficiency measures installed during 2006-2020.”

The Efficient Use of Energy Act was developed by an energy efficiency task force convened by Gov. Richardson. Energy efficiency advocates, gas and electric utilities, and consumer representatives resolved their differences in task force negotiations, paving the way for approval of the Act without controversy. SWEEP participated in the task force.

“The Efficient Use of Energy Act should move New Mexico from a lagging to a leading state with respect to utility energy conservation programs,” commented Gail Ryba, SWEEP’s New Mexico representative. “These programs could reduce peak electricity demand in the state by over 700 Megawatts (MW) by 2020, equivalent to the output of two medium-size power plants.”

“The legislation will save water as well natural gas and electricity,” Dr. Ryba added. Water savings result from certain energy savings measures such as resource-efficient dishwashers and clothes washers, as well as from less operation of coal- and gas-fired power plants. SWEEP estimates the Act will save at least 6 billion gallons of water during 2006-2020. In addition, the Act should help lower-income households reduce their high energy cost burden.

SWEEP thanks Governor Richardson for his leadership and support of the Efficient Use of Energy Act, as well as other participants in the task force that developed the legislation.

About SWEEP: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. For more information including a link to the Efficient Use of Energy Act, visit the SWEEP website at www.swenergy.org.