

Environmental and Utilities Update

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JANUARY 2010

New Geothermal Incentive Program Launched in Connecticut

Following on the heels of the new solar thermal incentive program, the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCEF) recently launched a new incentive program for ground source heat pump (GSHP), also known as "geothermal" systems. The program is funded by \$5 million from the federal economic stimulus package under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The incentive program is open to Connecticut businesses, organizations, and homeowners who install geothermal systems as the primary heating and cooling system for a building. Incentives will be available for new construction and existing buildings (retrofits).

What is Geothermal?

Geothermal systems use the Earth's subsurface heat to warm and cool a building. Geothermal systems are typically comprised of a ground loop, heat pump, and interior ducting or piping. Only closed loop systems are eligible for incentives under this program.

Applicant Eligibility

- Residents, businesses, organizations, third-party power providers (through power purchase agreements).
- Developers are eligible to apply for incentives for up to 25 residential dwellings.
- Commercial facilities and state and municipal buildings must meet Connecticut building code standards for efficiency.

System Eligibility

- Systems must be designed by an International Ground Source Heat Pump Association (IGSHPA)-certified installer or a certified GeoExchange Designer.
- The equipment must be commercially available, with manufacturers' warranties.
- Heat pumps must meet Energy Star requirements.
- Residential systems will be limited to 6 tons (cooling capacity) per dwelling unit.
- Commercial systems will be limited to 100 tons (cooling capacity).
- Minimum capacity: 50 percent of total heating load, based on estimated usage.
- Maximum capacity: 100 percent of the peak heating or cooling load, whichever is greater.

- Systems must be verified to meet 85 percent of the rated coefficient of performance (COP) or energy efficiency ratio (EER) and 85 percent of the rated capacity of the system.

Incentive Levels

Grants will be awarded to qualifying projects on a "first come, first served" basis.

- Grant amounts:
 - Non-residential for-profit - \$1,200 per ton of air-conditioning capacity
 - Non-residential nonprofit - \$2,000 per ton of air-conditioning capacity
 - Residential (new construction) - \$1,200 per ton of air-conditioning capacity
 - Residential (retrofits of existing building) - \$2,000 per ton of air-conditioning capacity
- Maximum incentive limits (project size):
 - Residential - 6 tons
 - Non-Residential - 100 tons

CCEF also administers other clean energy grant programs for photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal, biomass, wind, fuel cell, hydro, and wave/tidal power projects.

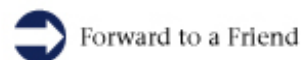
For more information about these new programs or for other questions regarding renewable or clean energy projects and incentives, please contact one of the following attorneys:

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