



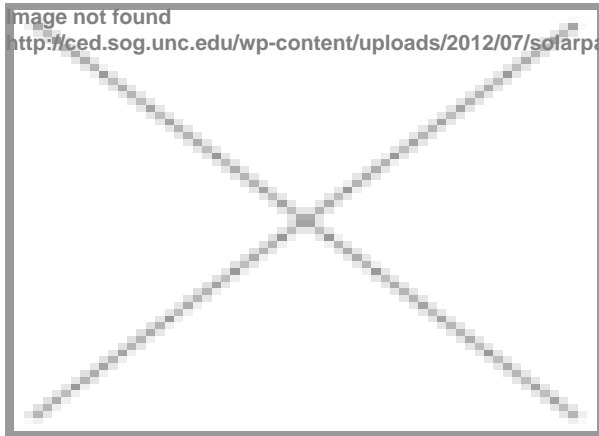
Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Promoting Energy Efficiency in Support of Rural Economic Development

By CED Guest Author

Article: <https://ced.sog.unc.edu/promoting-energy-efficiency-in-support-of-rural-economic-development/>

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The USDA and the Department of Energy are helping rural

communities "...create jobs, grow markets for American-made products, reduce energy bills for families and businesses and make the American economy more competitive" by providing funding to promote energy efficiency. The USDA provides loan guarantees to make improvements to generation and transmission facilities and implement smart grid technologies, while the Department of Energy offers grant funds that provide energy efficiency assistance to often overlooked or understaffed rural public school systems, community colleges and local governments. Between the two initiatives, rural entities in North Carolina is slated to receive roughly \$30.5 million.

Yesterday, the USDA Rural Development's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) announced \$287 million in loan guarantees to aid electric utilities upgrade, expand, maintain and replace rural America's electric infrastructure.

Two North Carolina entities received roughly \$30 million of this investment. The *Surry-Yadkin Electric Membership Corporation* secured \$20,000,000 to build and improve 114 miles of distribution and transmission line and make other system improvements, serving 1,489 customers. The loan includes \$1,348,950 in smart grid projects. The *Cape Hatteras Electric Membership Corporation* received \$9,792,000 to build and improve 17 miles of distribution and transmission line and make other system improvements, serving 290 customers. The loan includes \$2,167,000 in smart grid projects.

In late June, the North Carolina Energy Office announced that it had received a \$532,134 Department of Energy grant to work with eight public school districts, eight community colleges and six local governments to plan, implement and finance energy efficiency improvements to buildings and other public infrastructure.

The School of Government's Environmental Finance Center produces extensive research regarding these types of initiatives, offering training programs and technical assistance to support communities across the southeastern region with their environmental finance efforts.

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