

EWEB offers grants for green projects

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By Susan Palmer, the Register-Guard, Eugene, Ore.

Oct. 05--Schools, nonprofit groups and government agencies looking for help with renewable energy projects can apply for up to \$25,000 in support from the Eugene Water & Electric Board.

The publicly owned utility's Greenpower grants program will award up to \$75,000 for such projects in an effort to educate the community and promote local renewable energy efforts, EWEB spokesman Joe Harwood said.

The money comes from EWEB's green power sales, where customers can opt to pay more for EWEB's two wind generation facilities and various photovoltaic projects.

More than 3,000 of EWEB's 78,000 customers -- about 4 percent -- support renewable energy, paying an extra cent per kilowatt hour for so-called green power, Harwood said.

EWEB has been offering the grants since last year as a way to encourage renewable energy projects close to home, Harwood said.

"It's just part of our effort to reinvest green power back into the community. You do a series of small projects, and over time the energy generated by those small projects can become significant," he said.

Previous Greenpower grants have gone to Lane Community College, which used it to build solar-powered charging stations for electric cars, and Adams Elementary School, which is in the process of installing photovoltaic solar panels at the school.

Northwest Youth Corps, an alternative school that offers education and job training modeled on the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, is putting the finishing touches on photovoltaic panels at its headquarters, thanks to a EWEB grant.

The photovoltaic system fits in with the school's mission of teaching youths about natural resources and energy management, said the school's executive director, Art Pope. The panels also

will reduce energy costs, with an estimated energy savings of between \$2,500 and \$3,000 a year, he said.

That's money that can be spent now on education programs, Pope said.

"I think it's a great way to promote renewable energy," he said. "Wind farms are a long ways away, but these are close to home and people can see them and feel them... The grants let smaller organizations that might never have the opportunity be a player in the green economy."

The grant application deadline is Nov. 1.

GREEN GRANTS

--Who: Tax-exempt groups with IRS 501(c)(3) status, academic institutions chartered in Oregon, public institutions

--When: Application deadline is Nov. 1. Recipients will be informed by Nov. 15

--Where: Application forms online at www.eweb.org/greenpower/grants

--Questions: Call or e-mail Tom Williams, 541-685-7160 or Tom.Williams@eweb.org

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