



2016 Annual Report

Montana Energy Office
at the

Department of Environmental Quality



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Energy Bureau Introduction

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality's Energy Bureau works *to increase Montanans' access to energy efficiency and renewable energy, improve the state's energy security, provide analysis of energy trends and issues, and demonstrate the benefits of compliance with environmental regulations through innovation, education, and technical and financial assistance.*

The Energy Bureau houses two sections; Energy Efficiency and Compliance Assistance, and Energy Planning and Renewables.

Energy Efficiency and Compliance Assistance Section

The Energy Efficiency and Compliance Assistance section runs the State Buildings Energy Conservation Program (SBECP), Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP), and SMART Schools. This section also does education outreach and provides information to the public on Montana Energy Code and radon mitigation. In addition, the Energy Efficiency and Compliance Assistance section monitors energy data and implements energy performance contracting (EPC) for Montana.

State Buildings Energy Conservation Program (SBECP)

Background:

State Buildings Energy Conservation Program improves facilities and equipment that result in cost savings by reducing utility costs over the life of the improvement. Investments are made in energy and water efficiency resulting in reduced utility and operating costs. The savings resulting from the projects are used to repay the investments. After an energy retrofit, a state agency uses funding that would have been used for energy and water bills to repay DEQ's investment in the project. This payment is equal to or less than the pre-retrofit energy costs it had been paying. Any additional savings accrue to the agency. After the investments are paid off, the state continues to realize energy and water savings, and the agency has continued benefits from the new equipment and improved buildings.

SBECP started in 1989 with \$4.4 million in oil overcharge funds. These initial funds were used to fund projects in the first four years of the program and to establish a revenue stream from repayments of energy savings that would provide cash flow for the sale of general obligation bonds. The Stripper Well funds allocation was a one-time funding from a federal court settlement provided to Montana. The first general obligation bonds were sold in 1993 and continued through 2006. The last bonds will be paid back with energy savings through 2027.

In 2007, the program moved away from using general obligation bonds. While bonds had been an excellent long-term funding source for the program, changes in the bond market created uncertainty and risk with further bond sales. Many states struggled with bond sales due to the economic recession. Montana did not sell bonds for projects through the State Buildings Energy Conservation Program or any other program as part of a successful strategy to keep Montana's bond ratings high.

The 2007 Legislature, at the request of Governor Schweitzer, appropriated general funds for the State Buildings Energy Conservation Program. This set up the framework for a

revolving program that was quickly expanded in 2009 with a one-time infusion of federal funds. Energy costs savings are collected and placed in a repayment account that is used for future energy projects in state buildings and for operating the program.

2016 Summary:

The State Buildings Energy Conservation Program (SBECP) has continued its efforts to reduce energy use and costs in state government, initiating 11 projects from FY2016 to FY2017, resulting in an estimated annual energy cost savings of \$252,846. During the FY16/17 Biennium the SBECP allocated approximately \$2.8 million in funding that came from the re-payments of loans made from 2009 through 2016. Using the re-payments from previous loans to reinvest in new projects has allowed the program to move closer to a fully self-sustaining program. Because federal funding (ARRA) seeded much of the revolving fund, some federal requirements remain. These requirements include Davis Bacon Act, National Environmental Protection Act, and National Historic Preservation Act. Quarterly and yearly reporting to the Department of Energy (DOE) is also required.

Investments in energy conservation from FY2009 through FY2017 have provided an estimated \$2.1 million in annual energy cost savings for electricity and natural gas in state-owned buildings. Adding the savings from proposed FY2018/2019 projects, the annual savings to state government will be more than \$2.41 million. ¹

Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP)

Background:

The Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) was established by the Montana Legislature in 1993. Prior to state-specific legislation, the federal Clean Air Act Amendments required states to develop programs to help small businesses (<100 employees) comply with air quality regulations. These state programs typically have three components: a small business compliance assistance program made up of small business environmental assistance providers' programs (SBEAP), a small business ombudsman (SBO) and a compliance advisory panel (CAP). These components work together and are monitored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Asbestos and Small Business Ombudsman (EPA ASBO). In Montana, the SBEAP representative is the SBO – John Podolinsky. John also acts as secretary to the Small Business Compliance Assistance Advisory Council (SBCAAC, same as a CAP) which is comprised of seven (7) members who are appointed by the governor, legislators, or DEQ Director. Members serve 3-year terms, advise the SBO on his/her duties, and meet at least once annually.

The SBEAP assists small businesses with environmental regulatory questions and encourages businesses to be sustainable. Initially, the SBEAP was created to be a resource for small businesses that needed assistance understanding air quality regulatory requirements, however, the SBEAP now assists small businesses with a wide

¹ Estimated annual accrued savings through FY18/19 Biennium is \$2,351,488. This number is calculated using the \$1,817,332 estimated actual savings stated in the FY12 report + \$252,846 estimated actual FY16/17 biennium savings reported in the FY16 report + \$341,667 proposed projects for the FY18/19 biennium.

range of topics including water quality, solid waste, recycling, pollution prevention, compliance assistance, sustainability, energy resources, and permit acquisition.

Small Business Compliance Assistance:

In 2016, the SBEAP prioritized promoting itself and collaborating with other entities that work with small businesses in Montana. The SBEAP attended, manned tables, and participated at a variety of conferences and workshops for small businesses including those sponsored by the Department of Commerce, the Governor's Office, the Department of Labor and Industry, Department of Public Health and Human Services, Montana Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, Small Business Administration, Montana State University, University of Montana, and the Montana Association of Counties.



Small Business Advocacy:

One of the roles of the Small Business Ombudsman is to advocate for small businesses. Actions include assisting small businesses facing enforcement actions with enforcement proceedings, commenting on rules that affect small businesses, and acting as a confidante for small businesses fearing they might be in violation of environmental regulations. In 2016, the SBEAP/SBO advocated for a gravel pit operator, a number of asbestos contractors and consultants, two recycling companies, a food-waste composter, and a property developer.

The SBEAP has an annual budget of approximately \$128,000 which is spent on salaries, benefits, resources, webpage maintenance, telephone hotline, and compliance assistance and outreach efforts. The SBEAP is funded primarily with air, water, and solid waste fees. The SBEAP has one full time equivalent employee who conducted the following actions in 2016:

- Conducted eighteen (18) site visits and related meetings with small businesses
- Assisted with twenty-five (25) permit assistance actions
- Responded to six hundred fifty (650+) requests for information mostly by phone and email correspondence
- Sponsored/participated in eighteen (18) presentations/trainings
- Presented at Department of Labor and Industry's SafetyFestMT event on asbestos, radon, and methamphetamine labs. Facilitated air quality, water quality, and hazardous waste programs discussion at SafetyFestMT
- Assisted/advocated for eight (8) small businesses facing formal and informal enforcement actions
- Developed two (2) publications for compliance assistance
 - Dry cleaner compliance assistance calendar

- Brewery map
- Attended meetings of DEQ Air Quality Program Compliance section, Clean Air Act Advisory Committee, Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Open Cut Stakeholder meetings, Asbestos Advisory Group meetings
- Participated on Lewis & Clark County's Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training Program, Montana Occupational Health & Surveillance Steering Committee, DEQ Safety Committee, Children's Environmental Health Association, EPA Region 8 P2 monthly meetings
- Participated on a national SBEAP/SBO Steering Committee and attended annual training in Raleigh, North Carolina
- Reported program activities to EPA

Ongoing Projects:

- Brewery sustainability project – the SBEAP has a contract with a small business called UnCommon Sense (UCS) that teaches businesses and organizations to be sustainable. DEQ and UCS collaborate with Montana State University Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC) in reaching out to breweries throughout Montana regarding sustainability, energy use, and water use. To date 10 breweries have been recruited to participate in sustainability training and assessing energy and water use at their facilities.
- On the heels of the brewery sustainability project and in an effort to leverage resources of other resource-limited programs the SBEAP co-founded "MTP4." MTP4 is a collaboration of the SBEAP, Montana State University Extension Pollution Prevention Program (MTP2), MMEC, UCS, National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), and the Department of Commerce Small Business Development Centers in promoting pollution prevention, environmental regulatory compliance assistance, energy and water use, and sustainability.
- Energy, Efficiency, and Environment Project (E3 Project) - The E3 Project is a collaboration of both public and private assistance providers specializing in the areas of energy efficiency/development, process efficiency, and environmental best practices. Project partners include the DEQ Energy Bureau, Montana Resource Efficiency Program – NCAT, MMEC, UCS, and MTP2.
- Montana Resource Efficiency Project - the Energy Bureau contracted with NCAT to provide technical assistance to eighty-two (82) entities including breweries, distilleries, retail and convenience stores, lodging facilities, healthcare, schools, local government, and manufacturing/industrial facilities. Technical assistance includes energy audits.

SMART Schools

Background:

The Montana SMART (Saving Money and Resources Today) Schools Program began as an initiative of the Lieutenant Governor's Office while Angela McLean was in office. She set out to create a program that helped Montana's public schools become more efficient, educate their students about resource conservation, and save money. Through the SMART Schools Program, interested public schools are encouraged to sign up for the SMART Schools Challenge, a friendly competition between participating schools that strive to save the most energy, divert the most waste from landfills, and implement innovative sustainable practices. The Challenge has three categories for schools to compete in: SMART Energy, SMART Recycling, and SMART Greening. Each school is offered free technical assistance from the Department of Environmental Quality, the opportunity to receive a scholarship for their Facility Director to attend the Building Operators Conference, a professional mentor, and free educational presentations from the SMART Schools Coordinator. The top twelve performing schools each receive a cash award of \$1,000 and recognition from the current Montana Lieutenant Governor.



Summary:

The 2014/2015 academic year was the program's pilot year. Since the SMART Schools Program began, over a hundred Montana public schools have completed the SMART Schools Challenge. Upon completion of the 2015/2016 SMART Schools Challenge, the 61 participating schools successfully saved \$173,275 from energy efficiency initiatives, offset 1026 metric tons of CO₂, and diverted 34.3 tons of waste from landfills. More than 1,500 students and faculty were educated through the free educational presentations.

Montana Energy Code

In 2016, the Energy Bureau provided information on Montana energy code, tax credits, and energy conservation to approximately 405 phone and/or e-mail requests. It is important for the bureau to provide the most accurate information available, and in most cases additional materials such as brochures and other publications are mailed to the inquirer.

Another responsibility the Energy Efficiency & Compliance Assistance Section has is sending out letters informing new homeowners about the statewide energy code. Staff offers to review plans and provide on-site energy code and efficient building assistance. In 2016, letters were sent to approximately 341 new homeowners. The mailings include a letter offering an on-site blower door with infrared scan builder

training, a residential energy code summary booklet, an energy code compliance label, a tax credit brochure, a new home buyer's guide to energy, and an energy code guide for new home construction. In addition to homeowners, all 16 of the Montana State Electrical Inspectors receive informational packets that include a residential energy code summary booklet and energy code compliance label on a quarterly basis. Inspectors are delivering the code summary and labels to all new residential construction sites they visit.

Training on the energy code is an excellent way to educate Montanans on energy regulations. Over the past year, DEQ personnel has conducted training visits with staff at the home loan departments at 36 banks and 62 building supply retailers around Montana. In addition, DEQ staff conducted six on-site builder trainings which demonstrated the blower door, infrared camera, and duct tightness testing equipment. At these sessions builders and subcontractors had the opportunity to investigate their buildings projects and see the effects of any poor insulation and air sealing practices.

Radon Control Program

Background:

The Radon Control Program was established by the Montana Legislature in 1993 through the Radon Control Act. The Program received approximately \$29,000 in federal funding matched by \$19,000 from the State. Funding is spent on salaries, benefits, test kits, and publications. Duties of the Program include:

- Public presentations to interested parties
- Developing, reproducing, and distributing printed materials to home owners and other interested groups
- Responding to telephone inquiries on a maintained toll-free telephone number
- Providing technical and training information for radon measurement and mitigation
- Maintaining and distributing lists of qualified persons who perform measurement and mitigation services
- Developing and implementing an effective communication strategy to encourage all home owners to test for radon
- Encouraging cooperative partnerships to promote radon testing of buildings and homes

2016 Summary:

In January, the Program issued a state-wide public service announcement supporting national radon awareness month. The announcement encouraged Montana homeowners to test for radon by taking advantage of the free radon test kits the Program provided to county environmental health departments for distribution. The Program purchased 200 short term radon test kits from Air-Chek for homeowners. Some of the Air-Chek test kits were provided to Capital High school students interested in studying radon in Helena. Previous test kits purchased and distributed by the Program were from AccustarLabs. The Department worked on mapping the results of the AccustarLab test kits with the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Staff provided information and conducted outreach by participating in several events across the state including House Day at the Capitol in Helena and the Home

Improvement show in Billings. Of particular note was the second-ever Montana Radon Conference in Helena. Thirty-five persons attended and participated in the conference titled, "Radon Education and Collaboration." Attendees and participants included two Helena schools, certified radon measurement and mitigation providers, county representatives, EPA, DEQ, and the Free Enterprise Radon Health Mine. Topics included student radon research, radon inspection and mitigation practices, radon health mines, radon in private groundwater wells, EPA and DEQ updates, networking, and collaboration. In addition to events, staff also taught classes including a builder training and an energy code training which involved radon reduction techniques for new home construction.

Montana Energy Data

Central to any energy management program is a means of maintaining utility data – units of consumption as well as costs. The energy database for the State includes over 3,000 meters or accounts. The database also includes utility data for 26 cities and counties and 42 school districts. Maintaining this database requires the cooperation of the major utilities (NorthWestern Energy and Montana Dakota Utilities) as well as cooperatives across the state. Most cooperatives (20) provide data monthly.

The database is not a stagnant repository of data, but is used for multiple purposes including:

- Benchmarking state facilities
- Identifying potential facilities for energy improvement projects
- Determining baseline energy use for energy projects under the SBECF
- Periodic review of energy use to identify trends and potential metering or billing errors

Benchmarking utilizes the U.S. EPA's Energy Star® Portfolio Manager. There are currently 124 facilities in Portfolio Manager. This includes most buildings over 5,000 square feet that are individually metered. Additional facilities and campuses will be added as more data is gathered. One of the goals of benchmarking is to determine an Energy Star score for applicable facilities. This allows a comparison between the facility and similar facilities across the country. Benchmarking is also useful in tracking the performance of a building, particularly one that has undergone a major energy retrofit.

Energy Performance Contracting (EPC)

The Energy Bureau administers the Energy Performance Contracting (EPC) program. Legislation was passed in 2015 which revised the program and provided DEQ with additional authority and responsibility for administering the program. EPC is an alternative delivery method to improve facilities with guaranteed cost savings used to repay the necessary financing. The program is available to state agencies, the university system, schools, and local governments. There are fifteen energy service providers on our pre-qualified list.

The EPC program has been developed through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy, the assistance of energy offices in at least 20 states, the Energy Services Coalition, and private sector consultants. This is to ensure the program is relevant on both the regional and national scene as well as adaptive to changes occurring in the

performance contracting arena. The major accomplishments of the program since October 2015 include:

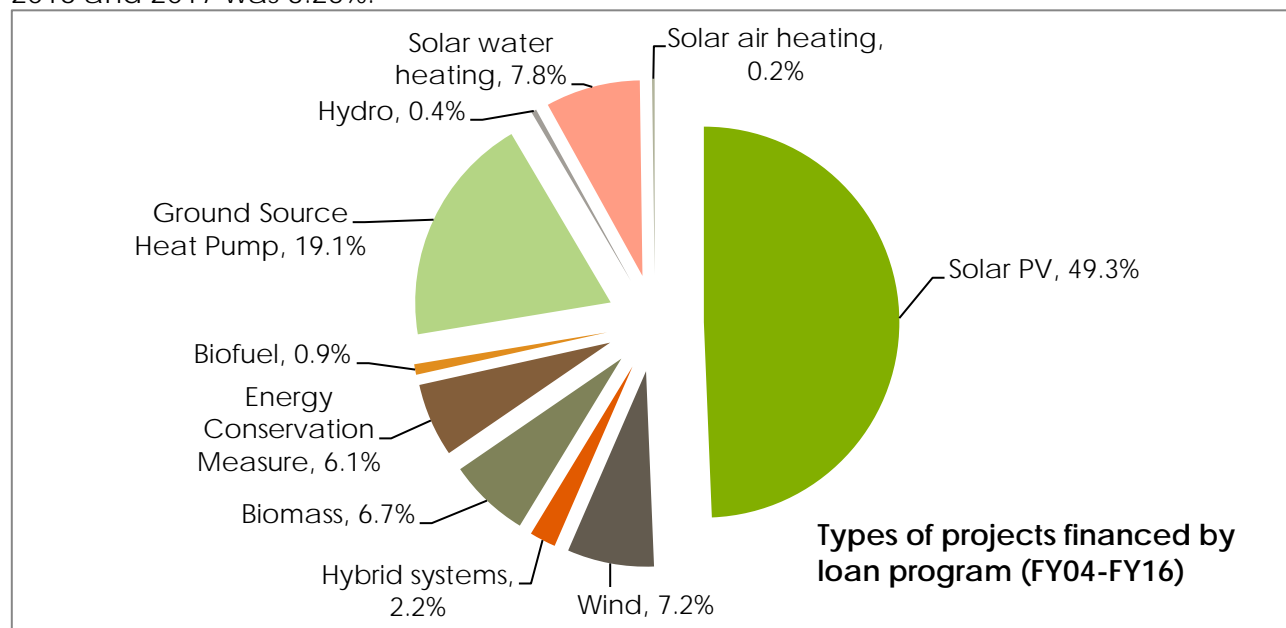
- Development of program documents and contract templates;
- Development of rules to administer the program through increased communication, definition of responsibilities for all parties (provider, entity and DEQ), and more consistency in the program by referencing national and international standards;
- Development of an EPC website – a virtual technical assistant – that provides general information on EPC, program documents and resources, and process tips to ensure a more successful EPC project;
- Meetings and other communications with stakeholders, including providers, financial institutions, state agencies, school organizations, and counties.

Energy Planning & Renewables Section

The Energy Planning and Renewables section runs programs such as the Alternative Energy Revolving Loan Program (AERLP) and includes Alternative Fuels and Transportation, Energy Emergency Planning, and is involved in the Energy Policy landscape for Montana.

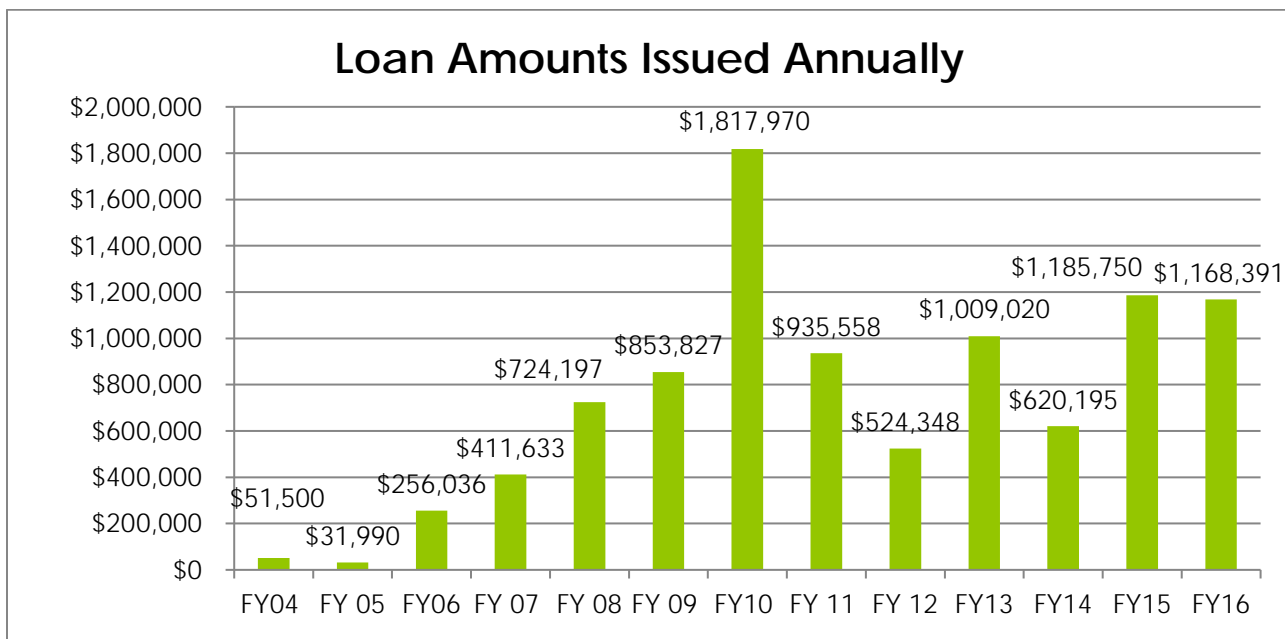
Alternative Energy Revolving Loan Program

The Alternative Energy Revolving Loan Program (AERLP) was established by the 2001 Legislature to encourage Montana homeowners and small businesses to use renewable energy. Loans are made for technologies appropriate to Montana at interest rates below the market average. The AERLP is primarily funded by air quality penalties collected by DEQ; however, in 2010 the program received a one-time infusion of funding through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. State and federal funds are tracked and reinvested separately. Loans are capped at \$40,000 with a 10-year term. The interest rate for 2016 and 2017 was 3.25%.



Historical Performance:

Through the close of FY16, the loan program issued 403 loans for 460 unique projects (in some cases a loan recipient has used a single loan to finance two or more energy projects). Total loans issued through the close of FY16 totaled \$9,489,161. The majority of projects are solar electric generating systems (solar PV), followed by ground source heat pumps, solar water heating systems, wind energy systems, and biomass energy systems (wood stoves)



2016 Accomplishments:

- The loan program issued 47 loans in sixteen Montana counties in FY16, with a total value of \$1,168,391. Most loans were issued for solar electric systems (37 loans), followed by ground source heat pumps (9 loans). Five loans were issued to commercial entities, and the remainder financed residential applications.
- The Energy Office partnered with Solarize Missoula, a pilot program coordinated by the Montana Renewable Energy Association, aimed at significantly increasing the number of roof-top solar photovoltaic installations in a defined area and time. Solarize Missoula resulted in 43 installations totaling 190 kilowatts of generating capacity between January and April, a historically slow time for solar installers. As anticipated, site assessments performed during the program time-frame continue to yield projects for the participating installers. The loan program financed six Solarize projects during the campaign, as well as several projects after the campaign concluded that were initiated by Solarize site assessments.

Alternative Fuels & Transportation

The alternative fuels and transportation sectors are dynamic and ongoing areas of focus in the Energy Bureau. There are three categories we are concentrating our efforts on this year. They include; improving the electric vehicle market in Montana, reducing diesel emissions in the transportation sector, and helping to advance alternatives to petroleum-based fuels in the transportation sector.

Accomplishments:

The University of Montana electric buses - The Energy Bureau helped the Associated Students at the University of Montana (UM) purchase two all-electric buses using with funding from the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA). UM is the first student-led transit agency to purchase electric buses in the country. The buses will help contribute to local air quality improvements by reducing emissions by 1,392 tons during their 12-year lifespan. Nearly 123,500 gallons of diesel fuel will not be burned because of the transition to the new buses.

Yellowstone Teton-Clean Cities Coalition (YTCCC) charging stations in Bozeman - The Energy Bureau is a member of the board of the YTCCC. YTCCC supports alternative fuels for transportation in the Rocky Mountain West. The Energy Bureau contributed funding for rebates available for the city of Bozeman through YTCCC that will fund two electric vehicle charging stations in Bozeman.

Electric Vehicles:

There are approximately 400 electric vehicles registered in Montana. These numbers include all battery electric vehicles such as the Nissan Leaf. They do not include plug-in hybrid electric vehicles such as the Chevy Volt. Improving the market for electric vehicles in Montana will require increased access to charging stations within and in the outskirts of cities and towns and along frequently traveled highways and interstates.

Projects:

Leading by Example – The Energy Bureau has requested exchanging our Bureau's two Toyota Prius with two Chevrolet Volts to lease from the State Motorpool. The Chevrolet Volt is a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle with 40-mile electric range and an extended gasoline range.

Establishing an EV corridor between Yellowstone and Glacier National Park – The Energy Bureau is working with partners to establish a charging corridor between Yellowstone National Park and Glacier National Park. Our first step is to contract with an engineering firm to complete a feasibility study to determine the best routes for an electric vehicle corridor between Yellowstone and Glacier and best locations (businesses, tourist destinations etc.) along those routes and in gateway communities near both parks. This corridor could help increase the visibility and exposure of electric vehicles and access to charging stations in Montana.

Volkswagen Settlement – The State of Montana is expected to receive \$11.6 million from the "Environmental Mitigation Trust" established by the national settlement between the U.S. Department of Justice and Volkswagen. The Energy Bureau will be working with local communities, school districts, and universities to invest Montana's Volkswagen allocation in alternative fuel transportation options and electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Montana.

Energy Emergency Planning

The Montana State Energy Assurance effort consists of state government's strategy for responding to a full spectrum of potential energy emergencies in Montana — whether a significant disruption of infrastructure or a shortfall in supply, whether driven by natural disaster or by long-term economic or market developments. The most critical events will be those widespread and often abrupt events that raise the price or reduce the availability of energy at the meter or at the pump in a way that causes significant economic hardship and/or endangers the health of Montana's citizens. The major energy sectors in Montana that could be affected include electricity (electricity generation and transmission), natural gas (production, heating, electric generation and transmission) and petroleum (mostly the refining and transmission of crude and refined products).

The Montana Energy Office within the Energy Bureau at DEQ is responsible for dealing with impending or immediate energy emergencies and is the primary agency for Emergency Support Function 12 (ESF-12) under the Montana Emergency Response Framework (MERF). The Energy Bureau's role under the Energy Supply Emergency Powers Act, applies only to the most serious events, and those in which the Governor formally declares an energy emergency.

The Montana Energy Assurance Plan written for energy emergency efforts will guide state government's procedures and provides a framework for action. The plan emphasizes preparedness, coordination, and flexibility. This plan is developed to foster coordination and mutual support between the efforts of the energy sector and the state should an energy emergency arise. Further, the plan provides a great deal of flexibility to address the broad spectrum of possible emergencies that could emerge. This Energy Assurance Plan contains steps state government might take to mitigate the effects of an unfolding emergency and perhaps in some instances to prevent an emergency altogether.

Specifically, this plan guides 1) how state government gathers information on the nature of the unfolding emergency, 2) how the needs of the energy sector (including media outreach to the public) will be conveyed and explained to those agencies and departments of state government most capable of providing assistance, 3) how the public will be informed about the emergency and advised on steps to take, and 4) how the state, if necessary and to the extent possible, will support essential services and distribution of energy products during an emergency.

Both the immediate and long-term aspects of an emergency are served by an "Energy Emergency Contact List," a comprehensive listing of energy emergency contacts within state and local government and, more importantly, within the utilities, electric cooperatives, petroleum refinery and pipeline operators, and key energy sector organizations. Members of the ESF-12 team also continually train within the Incident Command System structure and during emergency tabletop exercises with other state and federal agencies. Montana's Energy Office maintains working relationships with all the major energy sectors in the state and uses its existing knowledge of the state's energy resources to fulfill its energy assurance efforts.

Energy Policy Landscape

Improving Montana's energy policies is a central component of the work the Energy Bureau conducts. Recent efforts have focused on supporting the implementation of common-sense net metering policies, expanding Montanans' access to distributed energy generation and energy efficiency opportunities, and continuing to work with regional stakeholders on how to modernize Montana's electricity sector to increase transmission capacity and diversify Montana's grid stabilizing resources.

Accomplishments:

NorthWestern Energy Sustainable Energy Pilot Projects – The Energy Bureau staff were active participants in NorthWestern Energy's Community Sustainable Energy Working Group series, helping to shape the scope and priorities for NorthWestern Energy's three pilot projects they plan to implement with a \$3 million budget. The first of the three projects, the 385-kW solar array next to Bozeman's wastewater treatment plant, was completed in 2016 and will be followed by projects in Missoula and Helena.

ETIC Draft Interconnection and Net Metering Legislation – The Energy Bureau provided input to the Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee (ETIC) to help the committee understand the challenges faced when determining whether net metering electricity customers are causing a cost shift and the need for more information to be collected on net metering systems in the state. The Energy Bureau supports the draft legislation on net metering and interconnection standards that came out of ETIC.

Expanding Community Solar – The Energy Bureau has been working with Montana's electric utilities and cooperatives to increase the implementation of community solar projects in the state to increase the opportunities for low and middle-income Montanans to own solar energy. To date, three projects have been built by Montana cooperatives with additional community solar energy projects being considered by other electric cooperatives as well as Montana-Dakota Utilities.

Upcoming Projects:

Montana Community-Scale Solar Strategy Project – In 2016, the Energy Bureau was selected to receive a \$380,000 award from the Department of Energy's SunShot Initiative. The federal funds will be used to implement a set of community-scale solar studies and community/stakeholder meetings across Montana in 2017. The goal of these studies and meetings will be to aid the Energy Bureau in the development of a "Menu of Options" for implementing solar energy projects of different types and sizes in communities throughout Montana. Using the completed Menu of Options, the Energy Bureau will work directly with communities in subsequent years to implement community-scale solar projects.

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