



MARC RACICOT, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

(406) 444-2544

PO BOX 200901
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-0901

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 21, 1996**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:
LINDA BEADLE, 444-6777**

DEQ PARTNERSHIP GETS GRANT TO CUT ENERGY USE, COSTS

HELENA--Thanks to a nearly \$550,000 grant from the federal government, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will lead a statewide effort to help local governments and communities reduce energy use and save money by making improvements in existing commercial buildings and multifamily housing.

Montana Partners for Energy Efficiency, a DEQ partnership with Montana Power Company, the City and County of Butte-Silver Bow, the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and New Horizon Technologies, was one of eight out of more than 30 proposals solicited nationwide to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Energy under its Rebuild America program.

DEQ Director Mark Simonich noted that Montana is one of the first rural states to get a Rebuild America grant. "This will allow us to build on the good, solid public/private partnerships we have formed and also help us focus on finding energy efficiencies by working on local government buildings and low income housing," Simonich said.

DEQ, along with its partners, will use the money over a three-year period to organize and coordinate the following efforts:

- The county courthouse, jail, a public housing complex and the NCAT building in Butte will be a prototype project for an energy audit, energy-efficient remodeling projects and post-retrofit monitoring and evaluation.

(more)

•A lead community from among Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell, Missoula, Billings and Helena will be competitively chosen to receive technical assistance with identifying and prioritizing projects, putting together financing packages and educating building owners and operators about energy savings.

•Once these two projects are underway, the program will be expanded by providing similar services to local governments throughout the state.

•MPC will incorporate Rebuild America activities into their facility audits, customer training, outreach and marketing, energy evaluations, and help with project financing, commissioning and technology research.

•NCAT will oversee the Butte project and also will provide technical assistance to Montana public housing authorities through another grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

•Butte-Silver Bow has committed to renovating its courthouse and jail to meet current energy-efficiency standards. This will include installing new electrical systems, voice and data systems, a new roof, a new boiler system and energy-efficient windows.

•The Public Housing Authority of Butte will participate in the Butte project as part of a larger effort to lower utility costs at its four housing complexes.

•New Horizon Technologies will participate in monitoring and verifying components of the Butte energy improvement projects.

For more information, contact Linda Beadle (444-6777) at DEQ's Planning, Prevention and Assistance Division; Vicky Hayes at NCAT (494-8673); Pat Penberthy at MPC (497-2758); Colleen Fine at Butte-Silver Bow (723-8262 x241), and John McBride at New Horizon Technologies (494-8646).
