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Argos, Bremen Receive Energy Efficiency Grants for Street Lighting

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The Towns of Argos and Bremen in Marshall County have been awarded grants that will allow for the retrofitting of the existing street lighting systems with energy efficient induction lighting. The grants are part of the Indiana Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program, which is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus package that came to Indiana from the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE). The EECBG program is administered by the Indiana Office of Energy Development (OED).

Argos has been awarded \$95,425 and Bremen has been awarded \$141,000 to purchase new induction lamps for every street light within the incorporated boundaries. Each town has committed to a local 20% match, and will supply personnel to conduct the retrofit. The lamps will be purchased from American Green Technology of Dowagiac, Michigan.

“This grant will help Argos implement an energy efficiency upgrade for street lighting throughout the town that we would not have otherwise been able to afford,” said George Null, Argos Council President. “We are currently funding improvements to our Emergency Services Building, and the result of that will also be a more energy efficient building. I am proud that Argos is adopting cost-saving, greener technologies in how we provide services to our residents.”

The current street lighting systems throughout both Argos and Bremen use outdated mercury vapor technology. The Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, which broadly established many minimum energy efficiency standards, specifically prohibited the sale of mercury vapor lamp fixtures and ballasts after January 1, 2008, and bans the purchase of new mercury vapor lamps by 2013. The replacement low-frequency induction lamps are comparable to LED in energy efficiency, with the benefit of being more readily compatible with the existing fixtures. The fixtures cost less to operate and will provide an improved quality of light.

Jamie Lindstrom, Lineman with Argos Electric, and Rich Martin, Operations Manager for Bremen led the efforts to apply for the grants, which entailed compiling data on existing energy usage and costs, as well

as sourcing the new fixtures. Jennifer Laurent of Marshall County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) provided assistance with writing the grant applications, and will coordinate ongoing grant administration and reporting requirements.

“Grant assistance is a valuable service provided to Marshall County cities and towns by MCEDC, and we are hoping the success of these applications is a harbinger of great things to come for our area,” Laurent said. “We have worked with our community leaders to identify and prioritize their infrastructure needs, and MCEDC will be an advocate for available funding at every level.”

Representatives from Argos and Bremen have been invited to a ceremony recognizing grant recipients hosted by Lt. Governor Becky Skillman at the Indiana Statehouse on June 22nd.

“The energy savings in Bremen alone as a result of the planned retrofit equates to about \$26,000 per year, in addition to having the new fixtures supplied through the grant,” Laurent said. “Our local public servants are working hard to stretch tax dollars, and their extra efforts to leverage outside funding and bring long-term benefits to our communities should be applauded.”



About EECBG: The purpose of the Indiana EECBG Program is to assist eligible communities in creating and implementing strategies to:

- Reduce fossil fuel emissions in a manner that is environmentally sustainable and, to the maximum extent practicable, maximizes benefits for local and regional communities;

- Reduce the total energy use of the eligible entities;

- Increase energy efficiency, reduce energy consumption and reduce energy costs through efficiency improvements;

- Create new jobs and increased productivity to spur economic growth and community development;

- Leverage the resources of federal, state and local governments, utilities and utility regulators; private sector and non-profit organizations to maximize the resulting energy, economic and environmental benefits.

For more information about EECBG, go to <http://www.in.gov/oed/2585.htm>.



About MCEDC: Marshall County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) works to expand and diversify the economy of the county by fostering investment in new and existing facilities and creating entrepreneurial capacity. For more information about MCEDC, go to <http://www.marshallcountyedc.org/> or call (574) 935-8499.