

## WBR ARTICLE

### Renewable energy projects underway on Wyo homes

By Staff

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CHEYENNE — A program to help install residential renewable systems is up and running with the successful implementation of solar and wind energy projects on two Wyoming homes.

Wyoming residents Terry Sandstrom and Chris Hill of Wheatland and Douglas, respectively, used federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds through the Wyoming State Energy Office to install renewable energy projects on their homes.

The residential renewable energy program provided grants of up to \$10,000 or 50 percent of project costs, whichever was less, for installing photovoltaic (solar), small wind, and ground source heat energy systems at Wyoming homes.

"This has proven to be a popular program and I'm glad that Wyoming residents are recognizing the benefits of renewable energy," said Shannon Stanfill, State Energy Office program manager.

Sandstrom used the funding to upgrade his stand-alone system to increase battery charging efficiency and battery life on his solar energy system, and to add solar panels for greater photovoltaic input.

"The house is not a small cabin," said Sandstrom. "I have the Internet, several small computers, and two large-screen televisions, and all of that. I'm not living a rural type of lifestyle up here. I use electricity just as someone would in town. In April I will complete the second step of this process, which is, I will put up six more panels for a total of 12 panels up, and a larger turbine. Between those two, I would think I'd almost be as close to self-sufficient as you could be."

Hill installed a 2.4KW small wind turbine with the goal of reducing utility bills on his two-year-old home. "We wanted to utilize the natural resource of wind to offset that cost," said Hill "It's extremely easy to use. We don't have any type of maintenance on it. In fact, the first scheduled maintenance is in 20 years. We've been looking at it (renewable energy) kind of off and on and once the grants came available we decided it was the most cost effective time to install."

The State Energy Office received over \$2.2 million in federal stimulus funding in December 2009 to help Wyoming residents defray the cost of installing renewable energy systems on their homes. The funding is part of the \$3.1 billion ARRA appropriation to the U.S. Department of Energy last year to fund state programs that prioritize energy savings, increase the use of renewable energy, and create or retain jobs. To date, more than 320 grant agreements in Wyoming are underway with other projects in various stages of completion.

For more information on Wyoming State Energy Office programs contact Sherry Hughes at 307.777.2824 or [sherry.hughes@wybusiness.org](mailto:sherry.hughes@wybusiness.org), or Heather Tupper at 307.777.2804 or [heather.tupper@wybusiness.org](mailto:heather.tupper@wybusiness.org).