



focus on energysm

The power is within you.

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for immediate release

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The New Year Means New Incentives For Renewable Energy Projects

- Zero-interest loans, Cash-Back Rewards and new Federal Tax Credits help homeowners and businesses become more energy independent by using renewable energy -

MADISON, Wis. (January 5, 2006) – Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, is helping residents and businesses statewide become more energy independent in 2006 and beyond. The Renewable Energy Program is offering Cash-Back Rewards and zero-interest loans to help finance the installation of renewable energy systems.

“As electricity prices continue to rise and as the cost of renewable energy systems goes down, it makes sense for Focus on Energy to help people plan, finance and install renewable energy systems,” said Don Wichert, program director for Focus on Energy’s Renewable Energy Program. “It’s our goal to increase the number of Wisconsin residents and businesses using renewable energy, in turn reducing their utility bills and keeping our air and water clean for future generations.”

To increase the number of renewable energy systems at work across the state, the Focus on Energy Renewable Energy Program will share the cost of installing these systems with the following financial incentives.

Homeowners and Businesses Can Combine New Federal Tax Credits and Cash-Back Rewards

Focus on Energy’s Renewable Energy Program continues to offer Cash-Back Rewards and Grants to Wisconsin residents and business owners for a variety of renewable energy systems. In addition to these incentives, on January 1, 2006, new federal tax credits were made available, making renewable energy systems more attainable than ever. Wisconsin homeowners can take advantage of the new 30 percent federal tax credit (up to \$2,000) between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2007 when they install a qualifying solar domestic hot water or solar electric system. A similar tax credit exists for business owners when they install a qualifying commercial solar hot water or solar electric system, with no maximum credit cap.

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Combined with federal tax credits, Wisconsin residents and business owners can receive a Cash-Back Reward up to 25 percent of the cost of a solar electric (photovoltaic) installation, to a maximum of \$35,000. Focus on Energy also offers a Cash-Back Reward for solar domestic hot water systems that can cover up to 30 percent of the project's cost to a maximum of \$3,000; for commercial solar hot water systems a Cash-Back Reward up to 25 percent of the project's cost is available, to a maximum of \$35,000.

For homeowners, the combination of Focus on Energy Cash-Back Rewards and federal tax credit applies only to solar technology; however, Focus on Energy does have additional Cash-Back Rewards available for homeowners who install a wind system. Furthermore, businesses that install a wind, biogas, or biomass renewable energy project may qualify not only for Cash-Back Rewards, but for business-specific tax credits that cover these additional renewable energy technologies with certain restrictions. Consult your tax advisor for more details.

Zero-Interest Loans

Easy to obtain zero-interest loans are available from Focus on Energy to help homeowners finance the installation of solar domestic hot water systems, solar electric systems and wind systems on existing, owner-occupied one- and two-family homes. The application and approval process is fast and easy. Homeowners can borrow from \$2,500 to \$20,000 through June 30, 2006; however, funds are limited and are available on a first-come first-served basis. No down payment is required, there is no application fee and no points are assessed at closing. Loan terms vary from three to ten years.

Homeowners and Businesses Statewide Are Eligible

Focus on Energy financial incentives are available for individuals and businesses located in areas served by electric utilities participating in the Focus on Energy Program. Homes and facilities that are "off the grid" (not connected to the local electric system) are also eligible, provided they are located within the service territory of a participating utility.

To learn more about Focus on Energy and its Renewable Energy Program, or to find out if you qualify for financial incentives call 800.762.7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About the Focus on Energy Renewable Energy Program

Focus on Energy is a public-private partnership that provides energy efficiency and renewable energy information and services to the state's energy utility customers. Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program seeks to raise awareness, provide training and financing, enhance marketing, promote technical assistance, and support the installation of renewable energy technologies across Wisconsin. Focus on Energy provides applications, with full program details, at 800.762.7077 or at focusonenergy.com.