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SUBJECT: Duluth Energy Efficiency Program launches rebate program for Duluth homeowners

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Duluth Energy Efficiency Program launches rebate program for Duluth homeowners

Duluth, Minnesota - The Duluth Energy Efficiency Program (DEEP) is launching community rebates to help over 450 Duluth homeowners with high energy bills, ice dams, and old furnaces improve their homes. Up to \$3150 in rebates are available for Duluth residents of all income levels.

DEEP is an ARRA-supported City of Duluth program designed to overcome barriers residents face when exploring energy efficiency improvements. "Most residents understand that improving their homes will save them money year-after-year, but aren't sure which improvements are best for their homes, who can do the improvements right, or how to pay for the initial work," said City of Duluth Community Development Manager Keith Hamre, "DEEP serves as a third-party helper to answer these questions and maximize the financial savings to families."

\$1.5 million of stimulus funds were raised to create a limited pool of energy rebates. DEEP prioritizes houses that have the highest energy use and improvements that will save the homeowner the most energy. Executive Director Jodi Slick stated, "In many cases, the households we'll help through DEEP will be able to get improvements with very little or no out-of-pocket expense and a net monthly savings."

To identify houses with the greatest energy need, a free energy score is generated by DEEP based upon actual household energy usage. Residents with poor initial energy scores are then referred to home performance audit programs. These audits generate specific recommendations for improvements. DEEP staff then works with homeowners to get bids on the work or instruct Do-It-Yourselfers in how to successfully complete improvements. A personal financial package is prepared for homeowners that leverages the various rebates, loans, and tax credits currently available. "DEEP is a comprehensive one-stop-energy-shop that helps residents get the improvements right and, very importantly, to not miss out on available incentives," said Dean Talbott, DEEP Program Manager.

"I am very pleased to see this innovative program move forward," said Lieutenant Governor Yvonne Prettner Solon. "This collaborative effort will create jobs, save money and reduce pollution. I believe that DEEP can be the model residential energy efficiency program for other communities throughout the state." Backed with the support of local and state government, DEEP is ready to help Duluth homeowners "Save Some Green."

With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Minnesota Department of Commerce through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Center for Energy and the Environment, and the City of Duluth's Community Development Block Grant Program, DEEP is changing the way Minnesota addresses energy efficiency.

DEEP also offers technical training scholarships to local contractors and will be releasing a multi-family program in the spring to address buildings with 4 or more housing units.

The DEEP program is administered by local nonprofit Common Ground. Residents interested in reserving a rebate may contact DEEP at 218-336-1038 or visit www.duluthenergy.org.

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