



WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EXPANDS AREA

The Weatherization Assistance Program service area that the NCRPC oversees has recently expanded from 33 to 35 counties with the addition of Marshall and Pottawatomie counties this spring.

The NCRPC began its Weatherization Assistance Program in 1979, accepting a contract from the Kansas Energy Office to perform certain rehabilitation of homes related to making them energy efficient. The original service area included eight counties. The early-1980s saw the addition of seven counties while another 18 counties were accepted in 1986 — bringing the total NCRPC weatherization service area to 33 counties. The recent addition of Marshall and Pottawatomie counties brings the total to 35 counties.

The Weatherization Assistance Program continues its purpose today of increasing the energy efficiency of qualified residential housing.

Funding for the program comes from the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP).

Margaret Cathey, NCRPC Weatherization Director, says the addition of two counties should be a seamless transition.

“Our inspectors will have to travel a bit further; however, we will

group the inspections from those two counties as much as possible,” Cathey says. “I don’t believe the homeowners from those counties will notice much difference. We have the paperwork from the previous organization so we will pick up where they left off.”

Eligibility for the program is based solely on income and verification is required. All work is done at no cost to the individual resident. If an application is approved, a pre-inspection is done to determine the amount of work necessary to weatherize the home.

Between the increased demand for services and the funding cuts the program has sustained in recent years, Cathey says there is a long waiting list. Work is completed on a first come-first served basis.

“We currently have a waiting list of 306 for DOE, which is the higher income limit grant, and we expect to be able to complete 10 to 15 this year,” Cathey says. “For LIEAP, we have a waiting list of about 475 and we plan to weatherize 101 of those this year. If we receive any additional funding we will complete as many as possible.”

Additional information including income guidelines and an application is available at www.ncrpc.org/services/housing_weatherization.html.

Weatherization Success Story



Improvements to this Salina home were a joint effort between the Weatherization Assistance Program and the City of Salina Housing Rehabilitation Program administered by Connie Cyr of NCRPC. Work was completed in January 2013.

The Weatherization Assistance Program invested \$7,552 into the project to purchase a new refrigerator, air seal, install a new cellar door, install fill dirt around foundation, insulate attics and sidewalls, and install a forced air furnace.

The Housing Rehabilitation Program replaced windows, repaired sheetrock, repaired foundation, rewired, installed ductwork and an air conditioner and replaced the hot water heater. The Blower Door Pre-Test was 7523 and Post-Test was 3038.

The homeowner’s electrical bill has gone from \$100 to \$57/month and the homeowner has begun making additional improvements.

Leadership : NCRPC Executive Board

Chair:

Tim Vandall, City of Ellsworth

Vice Chair:

Frank Ryttych, Republic Co.

Secretary/Treasurer:

Brian Ellert, Mitchell Co.

Executive Board Members:

Jon Blanchard, City of Salina
Karen Brumbaugh, Ottawa Co.
Craig Chamberlin, Dickinson Co.
Tom Claussen, Mitchell Co.
Johnita Crawford, Cloud Co.
Dwight Frost, Jewell Co.

Hannah Furbeck, Saline Co.
Heather Hartman, Mitchell Co. Comm. Dev.
Gerald Huehl, Lincoln Co.
George McCune, Marshall Co.
Gary Ouellette, Washington Co.
Kermit Rush, Ellsworth Co.
David Thurlow, Clay Co.

NCRPC Executive Board Welcomes Chamberlin

Craig Chamberlin joined the NCRPC Executive Board in 2013 after being elected to the Dickinson County Board of Commissioners.



Craig Chamberlin

He retired in October 2012 from the Corps of Engineers where he worked for more

than 36 years in a variety of roles including as a construction representative, an equipment operator and contracting officers.

A graduate of Kansas State University, he has served on a number of boards including the Chapman USD #473 School Board, Noble Township Board as Trustee and Treasurer, Dickinson County Historical Society Board and the Dickinson County Extension Board.

Craig is married to Vicky and they enjoy spending time farming and caring for their livestock.

The NCRPC welcomes Craig and wishes to thank the entire Executive Board for their time and commitment to serving the region. We plan to feature each of the new board members in future issues.

CDBG Records Should be Maintained Longer

Records retention is important for all grantees receiving awards through the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. At the time of project completion, grantees receive a letter from KDOC with instructions about how long to maintain project files. It has recently been called to our attention

that records must be maintained longer than KDOC had previously stated. Grantees are encouraged to contact the NCRPC or KDOC prior to disposing of any CDBG records/files that they still possess. Most records will need to be maintained for approximately 15 years after project completion rather than the previously noted three to four years.

NCRPC Executive Board Takes Trip to Ellsworth

The NCRPC Executive Board continued its annual field trip tradition and this year chose to tour several facilities in Ellsworth. The day began at Great Plains Manufacturing where board members toured the Tillage Implementation Plant.

Lunch was hosted at Pretty Boy Floyd's in downtown Ellsworth. The afternoon began with a tour of the Ellsworth Correctional Facility. Board members concluded the day with a tour of Cashco, Inc., which is a manufacturer and marketer of a broad line of control valves, pressure reducing regulators and back pressure regulators.

"The NCRPC field trip is a valuable tool that allows the board to see



NCRPC board and staff members enjoyed lunch at Pretty Boy Floyd's located in Ellsworth's historic underground.

other organizations in action," Tim Vandall, Board Chair, says. "It's interesting to see first hand how certain companies operate."

NCRPC Executive Director Doug McKinney agreed.

"The outing provides the board an opportunity to interact with businesses that connect with supporting entities in other parts of the region and state," McKinney says.

looking ahead : Meetings, Deadlines, and More

Thursday, May 30, 2013

Executive Board Meeting
Beloit Main Office, 2 p.m.

Thursday, July 25, 2013

Executive Board Meeting
Beloit Main Office, 2 p.m.

FY 2014 CDBG Grant Deadlines

Housing — Aug. 29, 2013
Water and Sewer — Sept. 26, 2013
Community Facilities — Oct. 31, 2013
KAN STEP — Aug. 15, 2013
KAN STEP — Feb. 15, 2014
Economic Development — Open
Window Jan. 1-Dec. 10, 2013



Contact Us:
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Send newsletter suggestions to
lthielen@nckcn.com.

They say no two snowflakes are exactly the same and the same is true for people. We have unique fingerprints, perspectives and physical characteristics. Communities are like that too. Over the years it has been fascinating to attend hundreds of meetings and interact with citizens mirroring the mindset of their home towns.

When I'm going to work with a community, I like to arrive early and drive around. It is amazing how very different one town can look from another. It is also surprising how much we miss about our own towns if we don't intentionally slow down and observe with a fresh perspective. Some communities are clean with very little trash; some have extra touches such as flowers in the summer or banners on light poles; sometimes several people wave and other times you just get the "you aren't from here" look.

Conversations at community meetings and during council meetings usually take on a certain tenor as well. Sometimes I learn more before we actually talk about the project they asked to discuss. Some leaders struggle to come up with a list of past projects or recent successes. Other towns have a long list of ways they have invested in themselves, taken a risk to make something better or just rolled up their

sleeves and gotten something done. Some towns want to do what the town down the road has done rather than forge their own way. The NCRPC helps communities with project development, including



Debra Ohlde is NCRPC Assistant Director.

funding. We often get questions about how towns have funded projects. Many communities are shocked to learn that other towns paid for projects with only local funds or had enough in reserves to match a grant 50/50. One can learn a great deal from observing other communities; how they look, how they talk amongst themselves, what

they have accomplished and how they present themselves to the world. Perhaps even more helpful is observing how communities approach opportunities and crises. If you believe in the future of your home town, it is important to honestly evaluate its personality. You may discover that you need to take a step back and adjust the frame of mind that has become the culture of your town. Take your city council members for a tour or challenge them to individually visit one other town that they admire. Encourage them to attend a conference or workshop in which they can hear how other communities make things happen. Change the dialogue to a more progressive one and you can change the future of your town.

Three communities in North Central Kansas will be receiving a KAN STEP Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to be used to install new waterlines, valves and hydrants. The funds will come from the CDBG Program administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce.

The City of Culver will receive \$236,757 and the local contribution will be approximately \$147,004.

The City of Enterprise will receive \$163,777 and the local contribution will be approximately \$76,000.

The City of Jamestown will receive \$185,724 and the local contribution will be approximately \$80,520.

The KAN STEP program, which is short for the Kansas Small Town Environmental Program, was created in 1998. The first project took place in Formoso in Jewell County — first with a waterline project and then with a fire station.

The program allows communities with a population of less than 2,500 an opportunity to pledge volunteer labor, donated equipment, and privately donated land as match for the purpose of constructing needed buildings or waterlines. Applicants must meet the 51% Low-and-Moderate Income (LMI) national objective. To be eligible for a KAN STEP project, the applicant must also develop a realistic cost estimate that shows a 40% savings over retail price.

The Kansas Rural Water Association provides project inspection and technical assistance to the KAN STEP program. To view an interactive map of current and past projects, visit www.krwa.net/projects/projects.shtml.

The second round of FY 2013 KAN STEP pre-applications are due August 15, 2013. The first round of FY 2014 KAN STEP pre-applications are due February 15, 2014. For more information about the program or for assistance in developing a potential project in your community, contact the NCRPC main office as soon as possible.

Survey Responses Sought for Regional Project

The NCRPC is conducting research with the aid of the Advanced Manufacturing Institute (AMI) in an initiative called "Regional Business Profiling and Innovation Networking Project." AMI is a multi-disciplinary center contained within

the Kansas State University College of Engineering. The survey can be found at the project website: <http://ncrpc.innovatekansas.org/> OR with the following direct link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HRGZ2GZ>. Thank you!



North Central Regional Planning Commission

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business updates

NCK Small Business Development Center Offers Valuable Services for Businesses

Since the North Central Kansas Small Business Development Center (NCK SBDC) began in 2003, the results have been impressive with clients starting more than 145 businesses, creating 515 full- and part-time jobs and generating more than \$24 million in sales. NCK SBDC Business Consultant, Linda Sutton, remains humble.

“Coming from a rural background I see the importance of businesses and helping them grow and be successful,” Sutton says.

Sutton offers consulting for three primary areas including start-up businesses, existing businesses, and business purchases and says education is important to success.

“All of our one-one-one confidential consulting is free,” Sutton says. “I also offer training seminars on a monthly basis and I try to tailor those to what clients request.”

The trainings and seminars are offered at a low cost — typically \$25 for a two-hour seminar.

Start-up businesses are required to take three core seminars before being scheduled for a consulting session. These seminars include “Meeting the 3 Ms — Learning the Basics of Money, Marketing, and Management,” “The Right Start — Using a Business Plan,” and “Cash Flow Made Easy.”

The NCK SBDC covers 11 counties in North Central Kansas including Clay, Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Ottawa, Republic, Saline and Washington. This core service area is nearly identical to that of the NCRPC, which Sutton says allows for a valuable partnership.



Linda Sutton

“The North Central Regional Planning Commission (NCRPC) Business Finance Program is able to step in at the loan packaging phase of a project and I work with a client to get them to that point. At the loan packaging stage, NCRPC Business Finance Director Debi Peters will

also help review the business plan and cash flow projections, so that additional feedback for a client is valuable,” Sutton says. “The different financing tools that the Planning Commission has are very helpful to the region and our clients.”

Sutton says that no two businesses are the same and everything is tailored to the individual and the business. For more information about the NCK SBDC, visit its website at www.ncksbdc.com.