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## Co-op Loans Help Two Local Businesses Expand

Northwestern REC adheres to and takes to heart seven cooperative principles. One of these important principles is our Commitment to Community. It is because of this principle that Northwestern REC offers its members numerous benefits in addition to electric service.

It is also stated in our mission that we help improve the quality of life in our areas of influence. From electric safety programs to wastewater solutions and teacher grants (to name a few), Northwestern REC is dedicated to this statement and proud to be a part of our local communities.

In late 2003, Northwestern REC revived its Rural Business Capital Loan Fund program by providing loans to two local businesses, also members of Northwestern REC. The Rural Business Capital Loan Fund program is one of two programs offered to new and/or existing businesses on Co-op lines.

Tool Rite, Inc., owned by Co-op members William and Palma Leone of Springboro, used the Rural



Tool Rite uses right tool - William & Palma Leone, owners of local tool and die shop, Tool Rite, Inc., stand beside the new grinder they purchased with a loan from Northwestern REC.

Business Capital Loan Fund to purchase a tool grinder and to complete a room addition on the shop. This is the Leone's second such loan from the Co-op to expand their tool and die business.

Whispering Pines Golf Course, owned by Co-op member William Kingzett and located in Meadville, also took advantage of this loan program to add a winter tubing facility on its grounds. The facility, called Avalanche X-press, opened earlier this year.

The Rural Business Capital Loan Fund program is designed to help Co-op members fund fixed assets for their businesses. It targets new or existing firms wish-

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## An Emerging Technology

Nanotechnology was featured at a recent new technologies conference and is considered by many to be the "biggest, newest trend emerging in the energy and electricity industry."

Speaker Jack Uldrich provided a glimpse of what nanotechnology might very well be like in the future. Uldrich described a high-voltage electric transmission grid based on flexible ceramic strands of cable rather than today's heavy cable.

He said, nanotechnology may offer utilities "healing" systems that can immediately detect when a circuit break occurs then form a bandage that would allow the power to continue flowing.

Other uses of nanotechnology include self-cleaning uniforms composed of "smart" microfibers, and cell phones so small they can be printed rather than manufactured.

"The advances we are beginning to see in nanotechnology will eventually rearrange the world we know now. It will cause each of us to rethink how we do business." ♦

## Idle PC's Guzzle Electricity

According to the Department of Energy, computers that are left to idle after business hours consume over half of the 53 billion kilowatt hours computers use annually. The cost of this unnecessary consumption is \$3 billion for U.S. businesses.

Not only are employees leaving their computers on at night, over 75% of the business computers in the U.S. have had the power-management feature disabled. At full power, a computer and monitor will use about 200 watts of electricity, and four watts while hibernating.

Some software companies and even the EPA have developed products to help reduce PC power consumption; however, perhaps the most obvious solution is to remind employees to turn off their computers at night. ♦

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ing to expand their business that will help to create and/or retain local jobs. Qualifying organizations can receive up to \$20,000 through this loan program.

The Member Equipment Financing program, the second loan program offered by Northwestern REC, helps businesses acquire equipment specifically needed to help maintain day-to-day operations. This would include equipment such as an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS), voltage conditioning, suppression devices, standby generators, motor upgrades, lighting or process equipment. Loan amounts can range from \$3,000 up to 80% of installed costs.

Northwestern REC commercial and/or industrial members interested in obtaining more information about either of the loan programs should contact John Anderson, Finance Specialist, at 1.800.472.7910. ♦

## The Co-op Principles

- Democratic Control
- Open Membership
- Limited Return on Investment
- Return of Margins to Owner-Members
- Continuing Education
- Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- Commitment to Community

## FREE 800# for Businesses

**Do you currently pay a fee for your business to have an 800 number? Do you pay other costs for having an 800 number? If so, keep reading!**

Northwestern REC has partnered with PowerNet Global to offer members and non-members long distance savings.

Our long distance program offers businesses (and residents) 6.9 cents per minute any time, all the time - that's in and out-of-state long distance. You even get a toll-free 800 number FREE - if you have an 800 number already, you can transfer it to this program. There are no minimum charges, no codes to dial and better yet, NO monthly fee.

Other features include calling cards, special international rates, and switching fees are reimbursed. For more information, call Linda King, Business Development Manager, at 1.800.472.7910. ♦

## On-line Energy Audits for Businesses

Energy Depot now offers a great on-line, do-it-yourself, business energy audit that addresses the full range of energy systems found in most small and medium commercial facilities.

The business-specific questionnaire allows participants to complete the audit in about 15 - 20 minutes. It



incorporates drop down menus, default settings and help screens. The questionnaire can also be printed out and completed off-line.

Once the questionnaire is answered, customers receive a highly graphic Business Energy Profile report that includes a cover letter, energy usage and cost graph, annual energy cost by energy system/appliance and recommendations with cost savings numbers. Also included is an Energy Library and Energy Advisor.

To conduct your on-line business energy audit, visit [www.energydepot.com](http://www.energydepot.com). ♦

## Energy Tip of the Day

Be sure to place the faucet lever on the kitchen sink in the cold position when using small amounts of water; placing the lever in the hot position uses energy to heat the water even though it may never reach the faucet.

## Co-op News

### 2004 Builder's Show

Northwestern REC will have a display at the Builder's Association Home Show, to be held at the Family First Sports Park in Erie, on April 1- 4. Stop by our booth for a chance to win prizes. ♦

### Teacher Grants

Northwestern REC began its Clearly Brighter Teacher Grant Program in 2001. Each semester, fifteen \$100 grants are awarded to K - 12th grade teachers for special class projects. Since the program's inception, the Co-op has awarded 89 teacher grants.

Applications for the next granting period, August 2004, will be accepted through May 1, 2004. For more information, call Amy Fuller, Marketing Coordinator, at 1.800.472.7910. ♦

### Co-op Fundraisers

Northwestern REC now offers local organizations a new fundraiser solution.

To learn more, call Linda King, Business Development Manager, at 1.800.472.7910. ♦

### 2004 Member Meetings

Northwestern REC has scheduled the 2004 Member Resource and Nominating Meetings as follows. Meetings start at 6:00 PM.

Nominating Meetings:

- April 5, District 4; Forest View, Linesville
  - April 6, District 2; Nick's Place, Edinboro
- Resource Meetings:

- April 7, Vernon VFD, Meadville
- April 13, United Methodist, Centerville
- April 15, Cranesville VFD, Cranesville

For more information, or to make a reservation, call Northwestern REC at 1.800.472.7910. ♦