

Fiscal Highlights

Agricultural Energy Efficiency Program - Angela J. Oh

The Office of Energy Development (OED) serves as the primary resource for advancing energy development in Utah. OED is a relatively new office, created by legislation in 2011 to centralize energy-related functions and budgets from other areas of state government. Its mission is to provide leadership in the balanced development of Utah's abundant energy resources through public and private partnerships for economic prosperity, energy independence and a reliable, affordable energy supply.

Through approval of the United States Department of Energy, the state is utilizing a portion of its remaining Petroleum Violation Escrow (PVE) funds to support the Agricultural Energy Efficiency Program. This program, now in its first year, will reach out to agricultural industries around the state, including farmers, ranchers, and other major agricultural users of water and electricity with a mission/directive to lower their energy or consumptive costs.

The program is intended to provide energy efficiency audits for agriculture producers at a very low cost. OED has teamed up with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Department of Agriculture and Food, and other entities to complete the energy audits and provide potential grants and funding for the audits' recommended upgrades.

Audits began in 2012 with dairy farmers in Northern Utah and will be expanded statewide to include outreach and training. Additionally, OED is working with a company called EnSave to create case studies that will illustrate the merits of an energy audit.