



## News Release

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### **NorthWestern Energy and the National Center for Appropriate Technology Offering Solar Electric Systems to Montana Fire Stations**

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**Butte, MT. – March 29, 2004 – NorthWestern Energy is recruiting Montana fire stations interested in participating in the second round of its solar electric demonstration project.**

The project was developed, and is administered, by the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT). The project is funded by NorthWestern Energy's Universal Systems Benefits (USB) charge paid by the Company's electric customers.

Six fire stations will be selected to participate in the project during 2004. The project was launched last year and the response from fire stations was overwhelming, said John Walden, NCAT's project manager. This year offers another chance for Montana stations to participate.

NCAT will install grid-connected photovoltaic systems, at no cost, on the rooftops of participating buildings. Each system will be capable of generating two kilowatts of electricity and will provide a portion of the building's electricity needs, thus saving money for the community. Any excess electricity produced by the system will be fed into the utility grid through a net metering agreement.

In addition, the project allows fire stations to produce their own "clean" electricity, which is less harmful to the environment, to save money, and to have an on-site renewable energy demonstration.

The project is open to all Montana fire departments that are electric customers of NorthWestern Energy. Interested stations must submit a completed application to

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NCAT. Systems will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis to the first six stations that qualify. Basic site requirements include a roof that is adaptable for the installation of solar panels and an unobstructed southern exposure from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To request an application packet, call (866) 723-8677 or email John Walden at [johnw@ncat.org](mailto:johnw@ncat.org).

***About NorthWestern Energy***

NorthWestern Energy, a division of NorthWestern Corporation, is one of the largest providers of electricity and natural gas in the Upper Midwest and Northwest, serving approximately 608,000 customers in Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska. [www.northwesternenergy.com](http://www.northwesternenergy.com)

***About the National Center for Appropriate Technology***

NCAT, a national non-profit organization headquartered in Butte, Mont., promotes small-scale, local, and sustainable solutions to reduce poverty, promote healthy communities, and protect natural resources.

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