



News Release

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NorthWestern Energy and the National Center for Appropriate Technology Recruit Schools for Sun4Schools Project

Butte, MT. – February 28, 2003 – NorthWestern Energy is recruiting middle and high schools that receive electricity from the company in Montana to participate in the Sun4Schools project.

This is the fourth year of the Sun4Schools project, a solar demonstration program that enables schools to generate a portion of their electricity from the sun. Five schools will be selected to participate in this year's program. The program is administered by the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and is funded by NorthWestern Energy's Universal Systems Benefits (USB) charge paid by the Company's electric customers.

NCAT will install grid-connected solar electric systems, also known as photovoltaic (PV) systems, at no cost on the rooftops of participating schools. Each system will be capable of generating two kilowatts of electricity and will provide a portion of the school's electricity needs. Any excess electricity produced by the system will be fed into the utility grid through a net metering agreement to serve other NorthWestern Energy electric customers.

The project extends beyond the practical. Students can learn about the benefits of solar energy through a special curriculum that has been developed by NCAT to correspond with the Sun4Schools project. Participating schools are able to monitor their system's performance on the Internet on a weekly basis.

Solar electric systems are easy on the environment. They help reduce reliance on electricity produced by fossil fuels and resulting greenhouse gas emissions. Each of the systems that are installed through the Sun4Schools project is capable of eliminating the annual emission of more than 3,500 pounds of carbon dioxide and nearly a half-pound of nitrogen oxides. And, solar electricity helps save money over time by allowing customers to generate their own clean energy from a renewable energy resource.

Each of the installed solar projects has a value of \$20,000. The Sun4Schools project is open to all middle and high schools that are electric customers of NorthWestern Energy in Montana. Interested schools must submit a completed application to NCAT. Schools chosen to participate must meet basic site requirements including a roof that is adaptable for the installation of solar panels and an unobstructed southern exposure from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. NCAT will award the recipients on a first-come, first-served basis. To request an application packet, contact Cathy Svejksky at (866) 723-8677 or by email at cathys@ncat.org.

About the National Center for Appropriate Technology

NCAT, a national non-profit organization headquartered in Butte, Mont., promotes sustainable technologies and community-based approaches that protect natural resources and assist people in becoming more self-reliant.

About NorthWestern Energy

NorthWestern Energy, as the default supplier, provides electricity supply and transmission services to Montana customers who have not yet chosen a competitive supplier or for whom competitive options do not exist. Regardless of a customer's choice of supplier, NorthWestern Energy continues to provide distribution service to all of its customers at regulated rates. Information about the new default supply rates and the resources regarding energy choice are available at www.northwesternenergy.com/energychoice.

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