



For immediate release
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Governor Bill Richardson Announces Recovery Act will Fund Statewide Energy-Saving Project

Traffic and Pedestrian Light Retrofits with LED Bulbs Will Cut Electric Bills

Santa Fe, NM – Governor Bill Richardson today announced that \$5 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has been allocated to the State Energy Program to provide traffic and pedestrian light retrofits at intersections throughout the state. Older, incandescent bulbs will be replaced with LED- or light-emitting diode- bulbs, which use significantly less electricity.

“It’s exciting to implement an energy-saving project that will touch communities across the *entire state*,” said Governor Richardson. “The documented savings from switching to LED bulbs at a traffic intersection is at least 80 percent compared to incandescent bulbs that have been used for years. Our communities will see an immediate reduction to their electric bills, and in these tough times every bit of savings is important.”

The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department manages the State Energy Program funding and projects through its Energy Conservation and Management Division.

“This additional ARRA funding provides the means to undertake and finish a project that has been on our radar for some time,” said Joanna Prukop, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department. “The economic and safety benefits for our communities will be felt for years to come.”

The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department is partnered with the New Mexico Department of Transportation to purchase and install commercially available LED traffic signal lighting at designated sites statewide. Department of Transportation District 1 (Las Cruces area) and District 2 (Roswell area) are scheduled for retrofit completion by October 30, 2009. Districts 3, 4, 5 and 6 retrofits will be completed by July 30, 2010. Additional traffic control devices such as school crossing flashers and other warning flashers are also slated for retrofits as part of this project.

LED bulbs use 8 to 19 watts of energy per bulb (depending on the color) compared to 150 watts per incandescent bulb. Besides saving huge amounts of energy, LED bulbs are much brighter providing for greater visibility at intersections. LED bulbs last for years meaning less maintenance and traffic tie-ups while bulbs are replaced.

LED technology has been around since the 1920s and has been used for dozens of purposes including digital clocks, light-up watches, and remote control and appliance lights. LED traffic light bulbs are clusters (or arrays) of pencil eraser-sized LEDs.

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