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**Response to LES' Sustainable Energy Program is Excellent;
Incentive Funds Now Depleted**

LINCOLN – Customer response to the Lincoln Electric System's (LES) Sustainable Energy Program (SEP) has been so strong that all of the program's \$1.1 million in incentive funds have been reserved in only four months, said J. Todd Hall, LES vice president of Consumer Services, at a news conference Wednesday (5/27).

The seven programs in the SEP were launched Feb. 1 and offer cash incentives that encourage residential, commercial and industrial customers to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient.

Key results of the SEP:

- LES received nearly 91 percent more applications than originally anticipated.
- Nearly 5,000 homes in the LES Service Area have undertaken energy conservation measures and received an incentive payment.
- It's projected the SEP will save nearly 7,000,000 kilowatt-hours and 3,670 kilowatts of energy.
- Combined first-year energy bill savings for participating customers will total more than \$500,000.

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SEP

Add 1

“The SEP was designed to be in place throughout 2009, but it was so well accepted that all funds will be depleted in only 120 days,” Hall said. “What this program has demonstrated to us is a strong desire on the part of our customers to become wise consumers of energy, and collectively they’ve helped us achieve the program’s goals. Moreover, because we have been able to allocate all the funds within four months of the program’s introduction, LES and its customers will realize energy savings heading into summer, the time of year when customers demand the most electricity.”

“We are all justifiably proud that LES keeps our rates historically low and our electric power reliably on,” said Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler. “But we can take equal satisfaction from knowing that our publicly-owned utility is also a leader in boosting energy efficiency and savings.”

Beutler added that investing in energy efficiency is the quickest route to lowering energy costs, and is the best way to quickly reduce overall utility costs, now and into the future.

“In the coming weeks, I will be announcing the investment of \$2.4 million in federal stimulus grants to boost Lincoln’s energy efficiency, save taxpayer dollars and create good jobs,” he said. “Building on the success of LES’ Sustainable Energy Program, and helping even more Lincoln ratepayers to realize the benefits of energy efficiency, is clearly part of that agenda.”

Hall noted that Whole House Tune-Up incentive fund applications that are faxed or postmarked by midnight today (5/27) will be funded.

The goals of the program are:

- reduce LES’ reliance on expensive peak energy in the summer months;
- provide financial savings to consumers; and
- mitigate year-to-year system load growth.

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SEP

Add 2

The SEP financial incentives to customers were offered to customers on a first-come, first-served basis for the following programs:

- Whole House Tune-Up Program: Residential customers in existing homes could receive up to \$200 for insulation, caulking materials, preseason cooling maintenance and programmable thermostats.
- High-Efficiency Heat Pump Program: Residential and small- to mid-sized commercial customers were eligible for incentive payments when replacing existing heating and cooling systems with high-efficiency heat pumps.
- Commercial HVAC Maintenance Program: This program helped commercial customers with HVAC maintenance costs.
- Commercial and Industrial Lighting Retrofit Program: Incentive payments of \$10 to \$75 per fixture were available for customers wanting to reduce energy consumption and costs associated with facility lighting.
- Commercial and Industrial Systems Commissioning Program: This program was designed to help business customers achieve energy and peak demand savings through a thorough evaluation of electric energy consuming systems and recommendations to implement low-cost measures.
- Low-Income Weatherization Program: Funding was available for tightening home exterior walls and attics to decrease air leakage and increase comfort and energy savings. Households at the 150 percent or less poverty level were eligible for this program, which was administered through the Nebraska Energy Office in partnership with Lincoln Action Program.

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SEP

Add 3

- Commercial and Industrial Energy-Efficiency Innovation Grants: Up to five grants totaling \$50,000 were available to business customers for project design assistance and/or developing and implementing innovative measures to improve energy-intensive processes.

Hall said LES will evaluate first-year results and customer feedback and incorporate them into a recommendation for funding the SEP in 2010.

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