

MEDIA RELEASE

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NC GreenPower Receives Funding through the American Rescue Plan Act to Help Reduce Energy Burden for North Carolina's Rural K-12 Public Schools

- **North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's State Energy Office partners with local nonprofit to support an energy reduction project for schools in economically distressed areas.**

RALEIGH, NC – NC GreenPower received funding from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) State Energy Office to reduce the energy burden for up to 40 of North Carolina's rural K-12 public schools. The funding opportunity is part of the American Rescue Plan Act.

This initiative will support the purchase and installation of high-efficiency light-emitting diode ("LED") fixtures at no cost to qualifying rural K-12 public schools in North Carolina's Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties with high eligibility rates for free/reduced lunch. In addition, funding will be prioritized for school systems in qualifying areas with disproportionate energy consumption and costs based on data from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's "Statistical Profile" tool. Overall, a heavy emphasis will be on upgrading qualifying elementary and middle school gymnasiums in electric cooperative and electric municipality service territories since they have limited access to utility-



sponsored commercial lighting rebates; however, schools within an Investor Owned Utility's territory are eligible to participate if the general eligibility requirements are met.

This effort aligns with recommendations from the North Carolina Clean Energy Plan to foster long-term energy affordability and equity for disadvantaged communities. Projects are scheduled to be completed by September 30, 2022.

About NC GreenPower

Formed by Advanced Energy in 2003, NC GreenPower is a nonprofit whose mission is to expand public knowledge and acceptance of cleaner energy technologies to all North Carolinians through local, community-based initiatives. Since NC GreenPower's inception, donors have supported more than 1,125 local renewable energy and carbon offset projects, producing 1.06 billion kilowatt-hours of green energy and mitigating nearly 107,000 tons of greenhouse gases.

In 2015, NC GreenPower launched Solar+ Schools to support solar photovoltaic installations at K-12 schools. By the end of 2021, the program reached a total of 56 North Carolina schools in 38 counties, bringing solar energy and STEM education to nearly 43,000 students. To date, the schools have collectively produced an estimated 615,798 kilowatt-hours of green energy, a savings of about \$58,000. Contributions to NC GreenPower are tax deductible. For more information, visit www.ncgreenpower.org.

About DEQ

DEQ is the lead stewardship agency for the protection of North Carolina's environmental resources. The organization, which has offices from the mountains to the coast, administers regulatory programs designed to protect air quality, water quality, and the public's health, and also works to advance an all-of-the-above energy strategy that fits North Carolina's needs. DEQ also offers technical assistance to businesses, farmers, local governments, and the public and encourages responsible behavior with respect to the environment through education programs provided at DEQ facilities and through the state's school system.

DEQ provides science-based environmental stewardship for the health and prosperity of all North Carolinians. For more information, visit <https://deq.nc.gov/>.

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