

**AGENCY:** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

**TITLE:** "WOODSTOVE CHANGEOUT PILOT STUDY"

**ACTION:** Request for Applications (RFA) – Initial Announcement

**RFIP NO:** OAR-ITPID-05-12

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO:** 66.034

**DATES:** The closing date for receipt of applications is May 30, 2005, 4PM EDT. Applications received via U.S. mail must be received in the Program Office by the closing date and time. No late proposals will be accepted.

To allow for efficient management of the competitive process, EPA requests submittal of an informal notice of "Intent to Apply" by April 30, 2005. Submission of an Intent to Apply is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow EPA to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted proposals.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals from State, local, multi-state, tribal agencies and non-profit public or private organizations or institutions, for partnership projects to develop and implement a woodstove changeout program in the greater Pittsburgh area of southwest Pennsylvania, and Libby, Montana, targeted primarily at low income households.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is \$200,000. EPA anticipates award of one to two cooperative agreements resulting from this announcement, subject to the availability of funds and the quality of applications received, ranging in value from \$50,000 to \$200,000. Applicants may propose to implement a changeout program in only one or both locations.

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## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

### **A. Background.**

Currently, there are no Federal standards that require woodstove owners to replace their older woodstoves and mandatory programs would most likely be unpopular and involve high administrative costs. There are about 10 million woodstoves operating today in American households that are used as a primary or secondary source of heat. Of these, 80% - 90% are the older, higher polluting and less efficient conventional stoves that were manufactured prior to 1988 when EPA issued emission standards. After 1988, all new stoves produced in the U.S. had to meet these standards, but since any woodstove or insert can last as long as 40 years there are still millions of non-certified stoves in operation. "EPA Certified" stoves are much less polluting (70% fewer emissions) and are more energy efficient than older non-certified stoves, and many of the units made today surpass EPA's certified stove emissions limit and are especially clean. There are also other types of very clean burning hearth products available to consumers today such as gas stoves and pellet stoves.

Traditionally, woodstove changeout programs have been based on retailers providing rebate incentives to consumers to make the investment required to upgrade older, higher polluting stoves or fireplaces, with newer, cleaner-burning and more efficient technology. Due to the relatively high cost of a new stove (plus installation), rebate-based programs have had limited success. For example, in the Great Lakes region 1200 old stoves were replaced in 2001 and in the Puget Sound area of Washington state, 1600 stoves were replaced out of a total inventory of 270,000 uncertified stoves. Clearly, we should strive for better results and we believe providing more than a 10-15% rebate is the key. For low income families a \$1500-3000 appliance, even with a 10-15% rebate applied, is still a significant financial investment. These households often rely on wood burning as their primary source of heat because it can be relatively cheaper than electric or gas heat. Also, in many cases they've had their woodstove for many years and it is inefficient and highly polluting.

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate that a new model for conducting a woodstove changeout program for low income homeowners can be developed and can be more successful in removing uncertified woodstoves than a rebate-based model. The successful applicant will be capable of leveraging the grant dollars provided by EPA to purchase a large number of highly efficient low-emitting wood burning heating appliances for qualified applicants in the pilot communities. Other appliances such as gas or propane-fired heating units, or wood pellet stoves may also be purchased at the discretion of the recipient after considering costs and the availability of fuels.

The pilot communities were chosen based on a number of factors. Both pilot locations (Libby, Montana, and the greater Pittsburgh PA area) exceed the fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The Libby area was also chosen because it is a small, economically disadvantaged area which has essentially one source of fine particulate matter pollution, residential wood combustion (RWC). A

rebate-based program would likely have little chance of success in Libby due to the relatively high cost of a new stove and professional installation in relation to the average household income in Libby. The other pilot area, greater Pittsburgh, is larger and has more varied sources of fine particles, but there are a number of uncertified woodstoves in this area, and many of these woodstoves are likely owned by low income families. It is important to assess the likelihood for success of a low income woodstove changeout program in more than one community type.

In addition to improving public health by reducing exposure to indoor and outdoor particle pollution and toxics, other benefits of switching from uncertified stoves include improved visibility in national parks and wilderness areas, and greater fire safety in the home from reduced creosote buildup in chimneys.

## **B. Scope of Work.**

OAQPS is seeking applications for proposals that demonstrate the effectiveness of voluntary woodstove changeout programs targeted at low income households at two locations, the greater Pittsburgh PA area, and Libby, Montana. The applicants should propose to carry out a woodstove changeout program in one or both of these areas and using a combination of grant dollars and their own funds, or funds from other sources, provide free EPA-certified woodstoves or fireplace inserts (or other clean burning appliance such as a pellet stove or gas appliance) to qualified low income applicants who are willing to surrender their non-certified wood burning appliance (woodstove or fireplace insert). The recipient will ensure that the surrendered appliances are either sold or given away to steel recycling facilities, or are otherwise safely destroyed such that they cannot be used again.

At a minimum, the applicant's proposal should address the following components:

- The logistical approach for the changeout.
- The potential universe of qualified low income participants,
- Supporting documentation that each participant in the changeout meets an established low-income criteria necessary to qualify for the monetary assistance,
- Communications with qualified recipients, appliance retailers and installers, utility companies, city officials, etc.,
- A method to receive and document data from retailers confirming installation as well as confirmation that the dismantling and proper recycling of the old stove occurs,
- Administering the funds, and all other functions of the changeout,
- A summary report for each changeout location that includes at a minimum, final numbers of stoves replaced, type of new appliance installed (i.e., woodstove, fireplace insert, pellet stove, gas appliance, etc.) and an estimate of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from wood smoke before and after the changeout, and lessons learned.
- Any partnerships it will rely on to fund, in part or in full, the proposed changeout program(s).

As part of its technical support for the project, EPA will make education and outreach materials available to the recipient in designing and implementing a woodstove changeout program. These materials include:

**Potential partners fact sheet.** Target audience: Potential partners. A two page document that outlines the value of supporting woodstove changeout campaigns and describes how nonprofit organizations and others can take part in changeout campaigns.

**Changeout overview brochure.** Target audience: All consumers. A six to eight-panel brochure that walks people through the woodstove changeout basics.

**Benefits fact sheet.** Target audience: Low income people who will need a good deal of persuading. A two page document that illustrates the primary benefits (e.g., burn less wood, save money and time and reduce fire hazards) and funding options available to low income families and households.

**General fact sheet.** Target audience: General public. A two page document that provides the basics on the woodstove changeout.

### **C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs.**

1. ***Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan.*** This project supports progress towards EPA Strategic Plan Goal 1(Clean Air and Global Climate Change),Objective 1.1 (Healthier Outdoor Air), Sub-Objectives 1.1.1 (More People Breathing Clean Air) and 1.1.2 (Reduced Risk from Toxic Air Pollutants), and Objective 1.2 (Healthier Indoor Air). In addition to improving public health by reducing exposure to indoor and outdoor particle pollution and toxics, other benefits of switching from uncertified stoves include improved visibility in national parks and wilderness areas, and greater fire safety in the home from reduced creosote buildup in chimneys.

2. ***Outcomes.*** Through this project EPA hopes to create public awareness of the health risks from breathing woodsmoke, demonstrate that changeout programs targeted at low income woodstove owners can be more successful than rebate-based changeout programs, and address air quality concerns in the targeted areas.

3. ***Outputs.*** The anticipated output for this project is a model changeout program for low income woodstove owners that can be used in other areas of the country.

### **D. Supplementary Information.**

The statutory authority for this action is Clean Air Act, Section 103(b) which authorizes the award of grants for research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys, and studies related to the causes, effect, extent, prevention and control of air pollution.

## **II. Award Information**

### **A. What is the amount of funding available?**

The total estimated funding for this project is \$200,000.

### **B. How many agreements will EPA award in this competition?**

EPA anticipates award of one to two cooperative agreements ranging in value from \$50,000 to \$200,000 resulting from this announcement. The actual number of awards will be based upon the quality of proposals submitted and is subject to the availability of funds. Applicants may propose to implement a changeout program in only one or both locations. Applications evaluated but not selected for this funding may be retained for a period of six months for possible future award under this announcement, subject to the availability of additional funds. EPA reserves the right to partially fund a qualified proposal or to make no awards.

Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial Federal involvement for this project will be:

1. close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
2. collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
3. approving substantive terms of proposed contracts;
4. approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
5. review and comment on all reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient);
6. reviewing a final summary study of the project.

### **C. What is the project period for award(s) resulting from this solicitation?**

The estimated project period for award(s) resulting from this solicitation is September 1, 2005 through September 1, 2007. All projects must be completed within the negotiated project performance period of 24 months.

### **D. Can funding be used to acquire services or fund partnerships?**

Funding may be used to acquire services or fund partnerships, provided the recipient follows procurement and subaward or subgrant procedures contained in 40 [CFR](#) Parts 30 or 31, as applicable. Successful applicants must compete contracts for services and products and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by these regulations. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not

required to identify contractors or consultants in their proposal. Moreover, the fact that a successful applicant has named a specific contractor or consultant in the proposal EPA approves does not relieve it of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements.

Subgrants or subawards may be used to fund partnerships with non-profit organizations and governmental entities. Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products to carry out its cooperative agreement. For profit organizations are not eligible subgrant recipients under this announcement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section 210 of [OMB Circular A-133](#), and the definitions of “subaward” at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or “subgrant” at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

#### **A. Eligible Entities.**

Proposals will be accepted from states, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, international organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, as defined by [OMB Circular A-110](#) and [OMB Circular A-122](#).

Non-profit organization, as defined by OMB Circular A-122, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations. For this purpose, the term "non-profit organization" excludes (i) colleges and universities; (ii) hospitals; (iii) state, local, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments; and (iv) those non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage of this Circular in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Circular.

Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

#### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching.**

Although cost-sharing or matching is not required, as a condition of eligibility, or otherwise, for proposals selected for award, applicants proposing a voluntary financial or in-kind commitment of resources will improve their scoring under the “Ability to Leverage Resources” evaluation criterion of this solicitation. (*Refer to Section V(A), Evaluation Criteria.*)

Voluntary contributions of funds and/or in kind contributions of resources, if accepted by EPA, will be treated as cost shares under 40 CFR 30.24. Applicants must propose eligible and allowable in kind contributions of resources to qualify for an improved score.

#### **Section IV - Application and Submission Information.**

##### **A. How to Obtain Application Package.**

Applicants may download individual grant application forms, or electronically request a paper application package and an accompanying computer CD of information related to applicants/grant recipients roles and responsibilities from EPA's Grants and Debarment website by visiting: [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how\\_to\\_apply.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm).

##### **B. Content and Form of Proposal Submission.**

Applications must contain a narrative proposal, and one completed and signed federal grant application package. The narrative proposal must explicitly describe the applicant's proposed project and specifically address each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section V(A), Evaluation Criteria*.

1. A complete application must contain the following, in the sequential order shown:
  - a. SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance, with original signature.
  - b. Narrative Statement, in the format detailed below.
  - c. Other supporting documentation.
  - d. SF-424 A, Budget by categories and indirect cost rate.
  - e. SF-424 B, Assurances for non-construction programs.
  - f. Certification Regarding Lobbying and SF LLL, if applicable.
  - g. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance review report.
  - h. Quality Assurance Narrative Statement, if applicable.
  - i. Copy of Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable.
  - j. Biographical Sketch.
  - k. E-mail address or self-addressed envelope (to receive notification of receipt of application).
2. The narrative proposal should conform to the following outline:
  - a. Cover Letter: Describe your organization's qualifications for the project and provide information relating to your programmatic capability to perform the project. The cover letter must be signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the project; and written on your organization's official letterhead.

- b. Summary Information Page.
  - 1. Project Title.
  - 2. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
  - 3. Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
- c. Project Description. The project description must provide a concise overview of how the applicant will implement and conduct the project and include a Project Work Plan (including a description of all tasks, dates of completion, products and deliverables, and proposed budget).

The narrative workplan must discuss how the proposal addresses each of the selection criteria in Section V and include:

- 1. A detailed project summary, describing specific actions and methods to be undertaken and the responsible institutions, including estimated time line for each task;
  - 2. The associated work products to be developed (e.g. partnership agreements, if any);
  - 3. An explanation of project benefits to the public;
  - 4. An explanation of how project outcomes (e.g., fuel economy and emissions benefits) will be designed for reinvestment;
  - 5. A detailed explanation of how project success will be evaluated; (*Refer to Section V(A), Evaluation Criteria, “EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs.”*)
  - 6. A description of the roles of the applicant and partners, if any; and
  - 7. Biographical information on key personnel identified.
- d. Detailed Itemized Budget. The proposal must include a detailed budget which clearly explains how funds will be used for the following categories:
    - 1. Personnel
    - 2. Fringe Benefits
    - 3. Contractual Costs
    - 4. Travel
    - 5. Equipment
    - 6. Supplies
    - 7. Other (including intern stipends)
    - 8. Total Indirect Costs (must include documentation of accepted indirect rate)
    - 9. Total Cost

If not self-evident, entries under each category must be explained in the budget itself or in the project description. Costs proposed in the budget should be linked directly to the proposal.



- e. Key Personnel. The applicant should submit an appendix with the resumes of up to three (3) key personnel who will be significantly involved in the project.

Applicants are strongly advised to avoid submission of non-essential materials unrelated to the proposal's requirements. Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed for content. Applications which do not conform to the specific outline and content detailed above may not be considered for award. **Incomplete applications will not be considered for award.** All application materials must be completed in English.

### **C. Submission Dates and Times.**

1. To allow for efficient management of the competitive process, EPA requests eligible entities submit an informal notice of "Intent to Apply" by April 30, 2005, to the agency contact identified under *Section VII, Agency Contact*. Submission of an Intent to Apply is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow EPA to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted proposals. Eligible entities not submitting an "Intent to Apply" are still eligible to apply by the deadline. The written notice of "Intent to Apply" may be submitted via electronic mail. Please provide the name of your organization, a point of contact, phone number, email address, and the title of your project.
2. The deadline for submission of completed application packages is May 30, 2005, 4 p.m. ET. All proposal packages must be received in the program office listed below by the deadline. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered for funding.
3. Electronic Proposals must be submitted in Microsoft Word, or Adobe pdf format to: [blais.gary@epa.gov](mailto:blais.gary@epa.gov). Proposals will be considered timely upon receipt, not transmission. An e-mail response confirming receipt of electronic proposals will be provided.
4. Confidential Business Information. In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

Because of U.S. mail screening at all federal facilities EPA highly recommends that applicants use express mail to submit their proposals. Initial Proposals and Final Applications should be addressed to:

Express Delivery Address (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.)

US EPA  
Attn: Gary Blais  
Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards  
4930 Old Page Road  
Durham, NC 27703

Regular Mail Delivery

US EPA  
Attn: Gary Blais  
Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards  
MD- E143-02  
RTP, NC 27711

**V. Application Review Information**

**A. Evaluation Criteria.**

Each eligible proposal, based on Section III, Eligibility Information, will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Proposals that are best able to directly and explicitly address the evaluation criteria below will have a greater likelihood of being selected for award. Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>MAXIMUM POINTS PER CRITERION</b>
<b>Ability to Leverage Resources:</b> Describe your ability to leverage the financial resources necessary to implement a viable woodstove changeout project at the proposed locations. If you leverage resources, outline your plan or process for obtaining the additional resources, the timing, commitments, and the likelihood of success. If possible, provide written resource commitments from proposed partnerships.	<b>25</b>

CRITERION	MAXIMUM POINTS PER CRITERION
<p><b>Management/Implementation Plan:</b> Describe, in detail, the plan for implementing the project including a timeline for each phase of the project. Indicate how you will acquire and install the equipment and include a list of potential partners. Describe the entities you will work with in implementing the proposal's objectives, including roles and responsibilities. Describe your goals for the project in terms of numbers of uncertified woodstoves replaced, and the amount of air pollution reductions expected in terms of fine particulate matter and toxics. The most successful applicants will be those that can demonstrate that their plan will result in the replacement of the greatest number of uncertified woodstoves at each location, and that their plan is replicable in other communities.</p>	25
<p><b>EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs:</b> Effectiveness of applicant's plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving expected outputs and outcomes identified in Section I of this announcement.</p>	25
<p><b>Technical Experience and Programmatic Capability:</b> Describe your technical experience with woodstoves, particulate matter issues, and any experience with changeouts, in working with partners, leading and managing groups, and implementing emission reduction projects education and community outreach, social marketing, advertising and public relations, or any other related efforts relevant to the success of carrying out this project. EPA will also take into account such factors as the applicant's:</p> <p>(i) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (ii) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports, (iii) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and (iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project.</p>	25

**B. Review and Selection Process.**

Each application will be evaluated by a team chosen to address a full range of air quality matters. The Evaluation Team will base its evaluation solely on the selection criteria disclosed in this notice. *(Refer to Section V(A), Evaluation Criteria)*

The highest numerically-ranked proposal(s) (subject to the quality of proposals and availability of funds) will be selected for award by the Selection Official.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Award Notices.**

Following final selections, all applicants will be notified regarding their application's status.

1. EPA anticipates notification to *successful* applicant(s) will be made via telephone, electronic or postal mail by July 30, 2005. This notification, which advises that the applicant's proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin performance. The award notice signed by the EPA grants officer is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 90 days from the date of selection. For planning purposes, the successful applicant(s) should expect to begin work by September 1, 2005.
2. EPA anticipates notification to *unsuccessful* applicant(s) will be made via electronic or postal mail by July 30, 2005. In either event, the notification will be sent to the original signer of the application.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.**

1. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at:  
[http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable\\_epa\\_regulations\\_and\\_description.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm)  
.
2. Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs may be applicable to awards, resulting from this announcement. Applicants *selected* for funding may be required to provide a copy of their proposal to their [State Point of Contact](#) (SPOC) for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the Initial Proposal and not all states require such a review.
3. All applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for a Federal grant or cooperative agreement. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B website at: <http://www.dnb.com>.
4. Non-profit organizations recommended for funding will be subject to a pre-award administrative capability assessment.

### **C. Reporting Requirement.**

The recipient agrees to submit quarterly progress reports to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period, including a description of equipment, techniques, and materials to be used or evaluated. A discussion of expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel concerned with the project. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports will be established, by EPA, after award.

A detailed final report will also be required. The final report should include: summary of the project, air quality concentrations prior to the changeout, reductions of woodstove emissions after the project and any detectable affect on air quality concentrations, environmental outcomes, problems, successes, and lessons learned. The report should also include the recipient's recommendations for replicating the changeout program in other areas of the country.

### **D. Disputes.**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) located on the web at: <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Agency contact identified in Section VII of this solicitation.

### **VII. Agency Contact**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** for application questions contact Gary Blais, US EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, MC E143-02, RTP, NC 27711, Phone 919-541-3223, Fax 919-541-2664; (e-mail: [WoodstoveRFA@epa.gov](mailto:WoodstoveRFA@epa.gov)) for questions about woodstove changeouts and EPA's woodsmoke reduction initiative: Larry Brockman, US EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, MC E143-02, RTP, NC 27711, Phone 919-541-5398, Fax 919-541-2664; (e-mail: [brockman.larry@epa.gov](mailto:brockman.larry@epa.gov)); or Karen Blanchard US EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, MC E143-02, RTP, NC 27711, Phone 919-541-5503, Fax 919-541-2664; (e-mail: [blanchard.karen@epa.gov](mailto:blanchard.karen@epa.gov)).

All questions must be submitted in writing via postal mail, facsimile, or electronic mail to the contact persons listed above, and must be received not later than 10 days prior to the closing date of the announcement of this solicitation. Answers will be posted, bi-weekly, until the closing date for this announcement on OAR's Grants/Funding website ([http://www.epa.gov/air/grants\\_funding.html](http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html)).

**VIII. Other Information.**

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no award as a result of this announcement. The EPA Grant Award Officer is the only official that can bind the Agency to the expenditure of funds for selected projects resulting from this announcement.