

Maine Department of Conservation
ARRA Wood-to-Energy Program for Public Facilities

RFA Questions & Answers - Extension Period

December 11, 2009

NOTE: QUESTIONS 1 - 39 ANSWERED IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT, PRIOR TO THE EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE.

Q.40 “We are working with a client who has a school project with a wood fired boiler under construction—can we retroactively apply for the grant to assist with this project?”

A.40 While we wish to fund projects that are “shovel ready”, grant funds awarded through this program can not be used to supplant already existing funds or applied for retroactively.

Q.41 “Application page 4 calls for the budget. If a school unit is contracting out the whole job/project does the total cost go under contractual or do we show a breakdown of that contract for the items listed which then means that the contractual really is a sub-contractual?”

A.41 The total should be listed on the contractual line. That said. It is up to the applicant to describe the project in the most detail to demonstrate each of the components of the scoring matrix.

Q.42 “How soon after the awards, or at what stage in the project will reimbursements be made? And if equipment manufacturers require a down payment to initiate an order, how long might the sub-recipients be required to carry this cost?”

A.42 We intend to minimize the time which sub-recipients will be required to carry expenditures. It is our hope that we will be able to establish a procedure for reimbursements which works for the sub-recipients. Sub-recipients should plan on a quarterly reimbursement schedule. Sub-recipients should plan on a 3-6 week turn around time on the reimbursements. Reimbursements will begin as soon after the award as expenditures are incurred.

Q.43 “Can you provide an update or direct us to information pertaining to the current rules regarding licensure to maintain and operate a low pressure (15 psi or less), wood-fired boiler in Maine? Of specific interest is what trained, but not licensed facility personnel will be allowed to do, including: ash barrel removal and handling, boiler tube brushing, burner/grate raking, mechanical work on the combustion equipment to clear fuel or ash jams, adjustments to boiler controls within manufacturers’ specifications, motor and gear belt tensioning and lubrication, shutdown and startup.”

A.43 On September 12th, the new provisions of the Maine fuel board became effective. Sections related to this question are in pasted in an appendix to this document.. See specifically Title 32, sec. 18141 (linked below) for the new licensing category of “limited wood pellet technician”. Additional questions specific to this issue can be addressed by Paul Moody or Bob Leclair at the Office of Professional and Financial Regulation. They can be reached by phone respectively at 592-4516 or 624-8678.

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/32/title32sec18141.html>

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Q.44 “What population are you wanting us to include in our data on population benefiting from project? Our school community population, or our entire town community population?”

A.44 Communities benefiting from the applicants project will be specific to each application. Populations could include the county, local community and/or the school and the students it serves.

Q.45 “How do we determine long-term job retention data for the fuel suppliers?”

A.45 Long-term job retention of fuel suppliers can be estimated by the length of time that the applicants project would be purchasing the fuel

Q.46 “Will there be another opportunity like this next year?”

A.46 Should we not be able to expend all of the available funds through this round or should the applications not meet the intent of the RFA, the Department of Conservation may issue a second RFA. That said, there is no way to determine this until after the applications are received and awards are made.

Q.47 “In the answer to the question on “Buy American”, you refer to the Federal Partners who you are working with who made the interpretation of the application of the “Buy-American” clause. Can you give me the contact information for a specific person who I can contact regarding this determination?”

*A.47 Kathryn Maloney, Area Director
11 Campus Boulevard, Suite 200
Newtown Square, PA 19073*

Staff here at the Department of Conservation can also help to questions related to the “Buy American” requirements.

Q.48 “In the first round of questions there was a response to question 11 about the “Buy American” provision of ARRA. Buy American does not appear in the application instructions, but does appear in Rider B of Appendix A, the “State of Maine Agreement to Purchase Services”. Is Buy American part of the application process, or only part of the “Agreement” entered into between the Department and successful applicants/grant recipients?”

A.48 The Buy American requirement is a federal American Reinvestment & Recovery Fund requirement. As the source of the funds, all award recipients must comply with this requirement and it will therefore be a component of the contract to receive funds.

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Q.49 “We have been told that the Skanden MultiFuel Heating System based on Danish technology developed by Reka qualifies for Buy American grants due to their unique characteristics. We want concurrence that if we develop an RFA based on their wood to energy boiler, we would not be disqualified.”

*A.49 It is the applicants responsibility to ensure that an appliance is consistent with Buy American requirements. Applicants are encouraged to review the standards listed in Rider B of the RFA Appendix and review the guidance document posted on the website at:
<http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/arra/pages/documents/BuyAmericanCorrespondence.pdf>.*

Q.50 “Currently, there are no EPA, DEP or other environmental regulations limiting emissions in Maine. Many states restrict emissions, but Maine does not. Many states have spent millions subsidizing the removal/replacement of high emissions wood burning systems. Massachusetts DOER has such a program now. How will you ensure that the Maine Dept. of Conservation grant program does not fund the installation of equipment that has been recently removed from neighboring states under such programs?”

A.50 The regulations that could apply to some of the facilities and units include Chapter 101 (visible emissions), Chapter 103 (fuel burning equipment PM emission standards), Chapter 115 (air emission license regs), and Chapter 150 (outdoor wood boiler regs). Regulations can be found at <http://www.maine.gov/dep/air/regulations/airegs.htm>. EPA will be proposing new source performance standards for small wood fired units, but they won't be in place in the near term and they will probably have a date after which installed units would be subject, but if they were installed before they would not. We have been and will be working closely with the DEP to ensure that the most appropriate appliances are considered for funding under this program.

Q.51 “The bulk of the information on the four page application and cover sheet will be duplicated in the body of the main RFA packet. Should we include detailed information in both places? For example, the system description, budget, schedule etc.?”

A.51 While there may be some redundancy, it is expected that applicants using the custom application guidelines will provide a bulk of the details through the narrative.

Q.52 “Can you please clarify the number of pages on the narrative section of the RFA. It asks for the narrative to be a maximum 20 pages double-sided. Do you want a maximum of 20 pages double-sided(10 sheets) or a maximum of 20 sheets?”

A.52 Applicants are asked to not exceed 20 pages of content. This would be the equivalent of 10 sheets of paper printed in a double-sided fashion.

Q.53 “Should the cover page and the four page application be part included as part of the 20(or less) pages or is that separate?”

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A.53 The application and cover sheet are not included in the 20 page maximum for the narrative portion of custom project applications.

Q.54 “Do I understand the answer to Question 19 correctly: that documentation can be included in the application as appendices and exhibits, and would not be counted as part of the 20-page limit to the narrative?”

A. 54 Yes, information requested such as site plans and manuals, may be included in the appendix portion of an application and therefore will NOT be included in the 20-page total.

Q.55 “The RFA requests a copy of the equipment’s operations manual. Our operations manual is a binder. The grant instructions ask for no binders. How should we handle submittal of that? Reproduction of the manual would be costly for us and bulky for you. I might be able to submit it in a digital form. Would that be acceptable?”

A.55 Electronic or digital copies of the operations manual are permitted providing that they are provided consistently with the requirements in Section 9.3 of the RFA.

Q.56 “How should we handle large printouts(plans etc.) Should we put them in an appendix?”

A.56 Large format documents such as plans may be included in the appendix.

Q.57 “When I printed out the cover page one box says, “An individual authorized to commit the:” Yes or No- what is that suppose to indicate?”

A.57 This is an error. The entire box should read “An individual authorized to commit the prime contract must complete the following:”

Applicants are encouraged to download a current copy of the cover page and application form, as other minor errors have been corrected in both.

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APPENDIX A

For more information regarding the Maine Fuel Board, and the operation, installation and maintenance of Biomass systems, please see Title 32, Chapter 139 of the Maine Revised Statutes. The following link should be included in the appendix

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/32/title32ch139sec0.html>