



Easy Ways to Make Great Use of Your EECBG

5 Lakes Energy has heard from many Michigan communities that are unsure of how to use their allotted [Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants \(EECBGs\)](#) from the US. Department of Energy (DOE). Some are even worried that they won't have time to figure it out and apply by the **April 30, 2024 deadline**.

We do not want any of our state's 60 local units of government with formula EECBGs (see this [list](#)) to miss this opportunity to save energy and money. If you don't already have a comprehensive energy plan to guide your EECBG investment—and aren't ready to start one—**here is some simple advice from our experts.**

1. Building improvements are a safe bet.

Whether your EECBG is \$75,000 or \$175,000 (or more), you can undoubtedly invest your full grant in energy-saving measures for your existing facilities that will immediately reduce your utility bills.

- ✓ If your buildings are “leaky,” it likely makes sense to start with **insulation and other effective air sealing strategies** to reduce energy waste (i.e., replacing inefficient windows).
- ✓ If the envelopes of your buildings are already performing well (and aren't leaky), it may make better sense to **replace aging HVAC or other equipment with highly efficient models**.
- ✓ And, if your buildings are well sealed and your equipment is not due for replacement, then **installing a solar array** on one of your properties is a relatively fool-proof use of funds.

Straightforward options like these—or **a combination of the above**—also make for compelling stories to share with residents about how your investments saved money and why they should support clean-energy.

2. Make it easy.

DOE is offering tools to make the EECBG process easier. They have created [blueprints](#) for activities that they've pre-determined to be “eligible,” including building upgrades. **Choosing a blueprint makes applying easier** and expedites the review process.

The agency also offers a **voucher option** for using EECBG funds for equipment or technical assistance. Along with less administrative burden, **this program features a simple [fillable application form](#)** that won't take long to complete once you have gathered the required information.

3. We can help.

Thanks to our generous funding partners, **5 Lakes Energy is providing free support** to Michigan communities who need assistance securing their EECBGs. We can help you:

- ✓ Consider your EECBG options and make a timely decision on what to propose.
- ✓ Complete your EECBG application, including using DOE tools to make that process easier.
- ✓ Develop your required [Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy](#).

We can also help you identify other financial incentives and complementary grant opportunities to stretch your EECBG dollars, as well as discussing larger climate and energy grant programs on the horizon.

If you're interested in learning more about this technical assistance, please contact Andy Draheim at adraheim@5lakesenergy.com. We're here to make sure that Michigan communities and residents enjoy the full benefits of available federal dollars for climate and clean-energy investments.