



Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor / Jack Lavin, Director

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Gov. Blagojevich Announces \$400,000 Opportunity Returns Grant To Support Clean, Renewable Energy Project From Olney Wastewater System



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

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GOV. BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES \$400,000 OPPORTUNITY RETURNS GRANT TO SUPPORT CLEAN, RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT FROM OLNEY WASTEWATER SYSTEM

CHICAGO – Gov. Rod Blagojevich today announced \$400,000 in *Opportunity Returns*

reconstruction of the Olney wastewater treatment facility and the production of clean local wastewater. The funding is coming as a part of *Opportunity Returns*, Gov. Blagojevich's economic development plan to spur growth and job creation across the Southeast and state.

"Sound and reliable infrastructure is an essential foundation of any community and attract new business and create new jobs. Through *Opportunity Returns*, Olney will strengthen that foundation, but also make use of an effective renewable energy strategy to capture an economic upside. Across the Southeast region and throughout the state, we'll continue to support important projects that are beneficial to both the environment and our economy," Gov. Blagojevich said.

Olney will receive the funds to repair its primary anaerobic digester (which breaks down organic waste to produce natural gas), install a new gas collection and clean-up system, and install a new cover for the anaerobic digester at the city's wastewater treatment facility. This grant, administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), will provide \$300,000 from the Renewable Energy Program, plus \$100,000 in emergency Community Development Assistance Program funds. City of Olney will contribute local funding for the project.

The cover on the primary digester collapsed last summer and was removed, leaving the digester unable to function as efficiently and effectively as designed. The new cover for the anaerobic digester will reduce odors at the facility and allow it to capture the natural gas from the decomposition process. DCEO estimates that the addition of the gas recovery and clean-up system, as well as the new cover, will save the city more than \$26,000 per year in energy costs.

"Gov. Blagojevich's *Opportunity Returns* program is proving itself to be a responsible way to support economic development. Without these type of partnerships between state and local government and the private sector, communities like Olney may be unable to meet unforeseen fiscal challenges and benefit from innovative energy programs with economic benefits such as this one," State Rep. Jim Murphy (D-Effingham) said.

(more)

DCEO's Renewable Energy Resources Program supports renewable and clean energy projects for a variety of sectors, including energy efficiency, energy for agriculture and for livestock operations with large waste streams, and wind power and solar energy.

"Gov. Blagojevich strongly supports the goals of our Renewable Energy Resource Program, which is to support energy efficiency, renewable energy, and to achieve environmental quality, public health and fuel diversity benefits. This *Opportunity Returns* grant to the city of Olney is a great representation of the program because the funding will be used to support the key objectives," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

Gov. Blagojevich's *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the first comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois' history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn't work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions based on their unique economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. Through a process of consultation and input from the input of local business, labor and public sector leaders, *Opportunity Returns* will take actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more competitive.

businesses.



olney renewable fuels.12-6-04.doc

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