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MEDIA CONTACT: Suzanne Pletcher (303) 447-0078 ext. 5; (707) 489-1325 cell;
spletcher@swenergy.org

Study: Energy Efficiency Could Save
Arizona Consumers $7.3 Billion

PHOENIX, AZ--Utility programs that save energy could create an economic windfall of $7.3 billion for Arizona, according to a major new study.

The study, *The $20 Billion Bonanza: Best Practice Utility Energy Efficiency Programs and Their Benefits for the Southwest*, was released today by the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project based in Colorado. The report shows that every dollar invested in energy efficiency programs returns more than two dollars in savings on business and household utility bills in the southwest, including Arizona. It is available along with state-by-state findings at www.20BillionBonanza.com.

"By scaling up energy efficiency programs, utilities serving Arizona can avoid spending nearly $10 billion constructing and operating power plants," said Howard Geller, executive director of SWEEP and principal author of the report. "Helping households and businesses save energy is the lowest cost, cleanest and least risky resource available to utilities today. All utilities in Arizona should implement Best Practice efficiency programs."

These programs would educate Arizona utility customers, offer technical assistance, and provide financial incentives.

Jeff Schlegel, an Arizona representative for SWEEP and author of the section on Arizona policies and programs, found that 10,400 new jobs would be created in Arizona by 2020 if all

utilities serving the state fully implement such programs and measures.

The report finds that it is feasible to achieve a 21% reduction in electricity by the year 2020 from energy efficiency programs implemented 2010-2020 and that Arizona leads the southwestern states in reaching for this target. Reaching the target would save the equivalent of electricity used by 1.4 million typical households in Arizona and require an investment of $5.5 billion. The investment would be split between utilities and their customers and yield a resulting savings on energy purchases along with public health benefits of $12.8 billion—or a net savings of $7.3 billion for the state's ratepayers, the study concluded.

"Beyond the financial return, there are other major benefits of saving energy," said Schlegel. "One of the biggest is that utilities can retire older, dirtier power plants without compromising their ability to provide safe, dependable power to customers. Closing old plants improves public health by significantly reducing air pollution."

Other benefits he cited if utilities implement Best Practice efficiency programs:

- Avoid or close 10.5 large power plants in the region

- Reduce CO_2 emissions from power plants equivalent to taking 1.9 million passenger vehicles off the road by 2020.

- Save 4.1billion gallons of water per year by 2020 through less power plant operation

The report identifies the most effective utility energy efficiency programs across the country and analyzes the costs and benefits of implementing these programs in the southwestern states of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. The report includes descriptions of the programs, state-by-state analysis, and a roadmap that policymakers can follow to achieve the 21% energy savings goal and benefits by 2020.

"Policy reform is critical to realizing the $7.3 billion bonanza for Arizona," Schlegel said.

The report notes that utilities serving Arizona have made considerable progress in helping their customers save electricity. But it also urges further action—from adopting more robust energy savings goals or requirements to allowing utilities to earn a profit when they implement effective energy efficiency programs for their customers.

The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project is a public policy organization that promotes greater energy efficiency in the southwest. For more information: www.swenergy.org.

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