

Request for Proposal (RFP): HVAC or Mechanical Contractors for PIIC Home Energy Program

Issued By:

**Center for Energy and Environment
212 North 3rd Ave, Suite 560
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Proposal Due Date: February 21st, 2025, at 6pm

1. Project Overview

The Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC or Tribe) is a Federally Recognized Tribe in Minnesota. PIIC is providing a Home Energy Program to PIIC tribal community members that includes energy audits and energy-efficient, carbon-reducing technology upgrades for tribal homes to address environmental and public health issues and support the Tribe's net zero emissions goal. One hundred homes are eligible to participate in this program, which is planned to run through the end of 2027. These homes are located on tribal land near Welch, Minnesota and are a mix of single-family site-built homes and manufactured homes.

PIIC has hired a program implementer, Center for Energy and Environment (CEE), who is responsible for delivering this program on PIIC's behalf. CEE is seeking to hire experienced mechanical or HVAC contractors to fulfill the program needs for PIIC. Details about the scope of work and the minimum qualifications that contractors will be expected to provide are below. Work is expected to be completed on a rolling basis beginning in the first half of 2025 and through program completion, likely at the end of 2027.

Throughout the program, CEE will work to engage the community and offer periods when community members can sign up and complete an energy audit, a crucial first step of the program. Following each period of completed audits, selected contractors will complete the recommended energy upgrades. CEE recently completed the first round of energy audits and just over 20 residents participated. Now CEE is working to hire contractors to complete the recommended work from this first round of audits as well as the recommended work that results from future energy audits. Ideally contractors are able to complete the recommended work within two months of CEE approving the work scope. Contractors will complete a site visit and develop a proposal for CEE using agreed upon base costs. CEE will approve the scope of work and pay for the work once it passes a quality assurance inspection. PIIC participants are not charged for the energy improvements.

Recommendations from the energy audits include weatherization (insulation) work and electrification measures such as upgrading to a heat pump water heater, to a cold climate air source heat pump as a

part of a dual fuel system. CEE will also make recommendations for general repair as it relates to this work. All homes receive electricity from Dakota Electric Association. Many homes receive natural gas services from Xcel Energy and some are heated by propane. Contractors should be Participating Contractors in utility rebate programs or show that they can quickly become a Participating Contractor so that utility rebates can be earned where possible.

This RFP and the consultant contract will be governed, as applicable, by the laws of the Prairie Island Indian Community. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply; however, preference will be given to organizations that identify with the requirements of PIIC's Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO) or Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE). To be considered for TERO or DBE status, subcontractors must submit additional documentation proving their eligibility.

2. Scope of Work & Mandatory Qualifications

Scope of Work

- Contractor will install new high efficiency heating systems, cooling systems and water heater heaters as recommended by CEE during the energy audit. Most of the installed equipment will be high efficiency natural gas furnaces, air source heat pumps, and heat pump water heaters, but other equipment may be recommended if there are limitations on a specific job site. These alternatives might include air conditioners, natural gas or electric resistance water heaters.
- Contractor must have staff or subcontractor(s) who are licensed to do the necessary electrical work for the equipment installations. Electrician work may also include wiring for newly added ventilation, panel upgrades and related electrical work.
- Contractor can repair existing equipment (furnaces, water heaters, air conditioners and heat pumps) if possible and when recommended by CEE.
- Contractor will comply with [PIIC Building code ordinance](#) and use the [Air Source Heat Pump Collaborative's Best Practices Guide](#) when installing ASHPs.
- Contractor ought to have the capacity to complete installations within two months of receiving an approved work scope from CEE.
- Contractor will complete installations and necessary work scope appointments on a rolling basis starting in the first half of 2025 through 2027, which is the length of the contract between CEE and PIIC. CEE will send requests for work scope appointments to contractor in a timely manner after energy audits have been completed.
- Contractor will submit work scope to CEE within one week of completing the site visit using agreed upon pricing.
- Contractor will provide the following information in either in the work scope or in supplemental documentation that is submitted with the work scope:
 - List any applicable utility rebates that the proposed installation qualifies for
 - Include a summary of the equipment sizing recommendation

- List the planned switchover temperature of the heat pump, when one is included in the work scope
- Contractor will be paid upon passing a CEE Quality Assurance Inspection, which will be conducted in a timely manner by CEE.
- If the work described in the work scope does not pass the CEE Quality Assurance Inspection, Contractor will work with CEE and the homeowner to address the deficiency.
- Contractor will work with CEE to submit required paperwork for utility rebates and other incentives whenever work is eligible.
- Contractor will submit utility rebate forms and other incentives when work qualifies.
 - Ideally the contractor has experience with the Dakota Electric Association's residential rebates and load management programs and is enrolled in Xcel Energy's mechanical rebate programs.
 - If the contractor is not already connected to these programs, explain your ability to enroll your company in their programs in the Questionnaire.
- Ability to obtain and maintain insurance of the types and in the amounts listed below:
 - General liability, \$2 Million Aggregate limit
 - Automobile Liability, \$1 Million Combined single limit
 - Excess Liability, \$2 Million, Aggregate limit
 - Professional Liability, \$2 Million, Aggregate limit
 - Workers Compensation, Statutory requirements
- Contractor will agree to use a SharePoint site to share invoices, paperwork and other materials securely and efficiently with CEE. CEE will set up this site for contractors.

Minimum Qualifications

- Contractor ought to have experience installing air source heat pumps in manufactured homes or explain how they are prepared to work on this type of dwelling
- Ability to complete work using agreed upon pricing, see details below.
- Must have a methodology to calculate sizing of heating and cooling equipment. Must be able to share the recommendation from the tool with CEE. Tools could include but are not limited to the [NEEP sizing tool](#) or a Manual J calculation.
- Ability to submit utility rebate forms and other incentives when work qualifies.
 - Ideally the contractor has experience with the Dakota Electric Association's residential rebates and load management programs and is enrolled in Xcel Energy's rebate programs.
 - If the contractor is not already connected to these programs, please explain your ability to enroll your company in their programs in the RFP Questionnaire.
- Ability to complete projects timely and professionally.

The project will cover multiple residential homes, and Contractors can submit proposals for some or all of the tasks outlined. Applicants selected will sign a service agreement with CEE to perform the work.

3. Business Status

Preference will be given to contractors who meet the following qualifications and who demonstrate their ability to comply with relevant regulatory standards:

TERO / Native American-Owned Business Status

Applicants are not required to have Native American-Owned Business status, but preference will be given to such applicants in compliance with our TERO. Any applicants who would like to claim preference under the PIIC TERO status must provide certification as a Native American-owned business, supported by documentation such as tribal enrollment verification or business incorporation records.

Read more about the TERO in this linked [PIIC TERO Information](#) document. Section 7a highlights the preference order of the TERO.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Status

Applicants are not required to have DBE status, but preference will be given to such applicants in compliance with federal grant requirements. Any applicants who would like to claim preference as a DBE must hold a current and valid DBE certification from a recognized certifying body, such as a state DBE program.

4. Applicable Regulatory Standards

Selected applicants will adhere to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements as specified in 2 CFR Part 200. The following federal provisions are to be incorporated into the subcontractor agreements, referencing **2 CFR Part 200**:

- **Equal Employment Opportunity:** Compliance with 41 C.F.R. part 60, Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, ensuring non-discriminatory hiring practices. Contractors cannot discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin in hiring, promotions, or other employment decisions.
- **Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) and TERO / Native American-Owned Business:** Compliance with 40 C.F.R. Part 33 and 49 C.F.R. Part 26 Subpart B for promoting the participation of DBEs in procurement. Contractors should make reasonable effort to hire and engage subcontractors with TERO or DBE participation through outreach, networking, and using directories of certified firms.
- **Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 7401-7671):** This Act ensures that contractors adhere to environmental regulations. This law does not directly regulate emissions from private homes,

but local or state regulations (derived from the CAA) may apply to activities like burning leaves, using wood stoves, or installing home heating systems.

- **Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §§ 1251-1387):** While private homes are not directly regulated, homeowners could be affected by rules on stormwater runoff, septic systems, and practices like improper disposal of hazardous substances or lawn chemicals, which can contribute to water pollution.
- **Debarment and Suspension:** Compliance with 2 C.F.R. Part 180, Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, ensuring that contractors are not debarred or suspended from federal contracts. Compliance checks may be performed at SAM.gov.
- **Procurement of Recovered Materials:** 2 C.F.R. § 200.323, ensures the use of recovered materials in federal contracts whenever possible. Contractors should promote sustainability by using recycled or recovered materials where feasible. For example, when installing energy-efficient systems in homes, using recycled insulation materials is encouraged.
- **Prohibition on Certain Telecommunications and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment:** Compliance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.216, ensuring prohibited technologies are not used in performance of the contract. Contractors must avoid using prohibited technology from banned entities like *Huawei* or *ZTE*. This applies to any smart home systems installed in private homes.
- **Domestic Preferences for Procurements:** 2 C.F.R. § 200.322, requires contractors to prioritize buying American-made goods for federally funded projects. This means giving preference to U.S.-produced materials, products, and supplies whenever they are available and practical. The goal is to support American businesses and manufacturing.
- **Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. § 1352):** Recipients must ensure that no federal funds have been used to lobby government officials or employees to influence federal contracts, grants, loans, or cooperative agreements. Contractors and subcontractors may submit certifications where applicable.

Other applicable requirements include:

- **Prairie Island Indian Community Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (TERO):** Adherence to the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (Resolution Number 22-11-2-202).
- **Compliance with EPA Environmental Standards:** All subcontractors must adhere to EPA environmental standards, particularly the use of recovered materials as specified in 40 CFR Part 247.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Subcontractors must adhere to the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§ 3701-3708), ensuring that all work is completed in a safe and compliant manner, protecting both workers and homeowners.

5. Selection Criteria

Contractors will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Status as a Native American-owned business or DBE (15 points)
- Experience and Qualifications (55 points)
- Cost Proposal (30 points)
- Compliance with Regulatory Standards (0 points)

6. Submission Content

Contractors interested in submitting a response should include the following content:

- **Completed Online Questionnaire:** Submitted questionnaires will be sent directly CEE. Within the questionnaire you will be asked to provide **two references** who can speak to your work, professionalism and experience. A link to the Questionnaire is on the RFP website.
- **Price List:** Use the provided Price List template to demonstrate the payment you'll require for this work.
 - Download the price list spreadsheet (provided on the RFP website). Fill it out as directed and submit it to CEE. Keep these things in mind:
 - Please edit the yellow highlighted cells or add more rows when needed
 - The provided line items are not a complete list of all possible line items.
 - Use this workbook to communicate the standard cost of installing equipment along with their standard (most used) line items associated with the project.
 - CEE understands that additional line items may need to be added when the contractor is developing the work scope.
 - Account for both labor and equipment costs in the provided line items. We do not need a breakout of these two costs.
- **Proof of insurance and proof of contractor licensure.** Please submit proof that you are insured as described above and that you are a licensed contractor in Minnesota.
- **(Optional) Business Status Documentation/TERO:** Submit proof that the business meets the first, second or third preference of the TERO.
 - First preference to an enrolled Tribal Members in all hiring, promotion, training, layoffs, and all other aspects of employment.
 - Provide a copy of an ID of enrolled PIIC member (example: driver's license, but identifies tribal affiliation)
 - Second preference to spouses, domestic partners or dependents of enrolled Tribal Members.
 - Provide a copy of ID of applicant and ID of relative who is an enrolled member and documentation to prove relation (marriage license, shared residence, etc.)

- Third preference to enrolled members of other federally recognized Indian Tribes;
 - Provide an ID of enrolled member in other tribal nation
 - Fourth preference to non-Native Americans who have successful work experience with Native American Tribes
 - Provide examples or references of tribal work
 - Fifth preference to all other non-Native Americans.
- **(Optional) DBE Business Status Documentation:** Submit proof of status as a Native American-Owned business and/or DBE business status.

7. Question Submission Instructions

Potential respondents to this RFP are allowed to submit questions to CEE before applying. CEE will share all submitted questions with all respondents so that all applicants have the same information when applying.

If you have questions, please email them to Danielle Hauck (dhauck@mncee.org) by 6pm on Wednesday, February 5th. Responses to all questions submitted by that date will be shared on Monday, February 10th by 6pm.

8. Proposal Submission Instructions:

Proposals must be submitted via email to dhauck@mncee.org by 6pm on Friday, February 21st.

The full proposal must include:

1. Submission of the online questionnaire (link on the RFP website)
2. Submission of the completed price list
 - a. Download the provided spreadsheet.
 - b. Follow the directions on the sheet.
3. Submission of the proof of licensure and insurance
4. If applicable, proof of DBE business status or TERO

Submit the Questionnaire simply by completing the form online and hitting the red “Submit” button at the end. All other items should be emailed as attachments to dhauck@mncee.org by 6pm on Friday, February 21st.