

itawamba Trends

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THE MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF THE ITAWAMBA COUNTY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



Mississippi Appliance Rebate Program to Launch Spring 2010

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has approved the State of Mississippi's plan for a residential rebate program for the purchase of ENERGY STAR-rated appliances. The program, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), will be known as the State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program (SEEARP) and is currently under development. The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) will administer the rebate program, which is expected to launch in Spring 2010.

*Consumers are cautioned to beware of
misinformation on the Web*

The rebate program will be designed to encourage consumers to purchase energy efficient appliances (such as washers, dryers, refrigerators, furnaces, etc.).

A list of appliances that will be eligible for rebates once the Mississippi program begins can be found at www.mississippi.org/appliance. The program

will not offer retroactive rebates for purchases made before the program launches next year.

A number of Web sites are offering information about rebate programs, but MDA cautions consumers to beware of misleading or inaccurate information on the Internet. The state's stimulus Web site, www.mississippi.org/appliance, is the official source of information about the program.

The site will be updated regularly with new and specific details about the rebate program as they become available. MDA is also working with retailers, utility providers, trade associations and other partners statewide to communicate accurate information to consumers as the program is launched.



Wilemon Meat Market opened in its new location on South Adams Street in Fulton on December 9. Pictured above is the ribbon cutting ceremony.

MDA Awards Grants for Energy-Related Job Protection Program

During the first week of December, the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) awarded 25 grants in the first round of the Mississippi Job Protection through Energy Economic Development Program. A part of the State Energy Program (SEP) funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the Job Protection Program allocated \$5.2 million to eligible companies in this round. Another \$4.8 million worth of grants will be awarded in the second round tentatively scheduled for early 2010.

"As Mississippi strives to become more energy efficient and energy independent, we are seeking innovative ways to reduce energy consumption and spur economic growth," said Gray Swoope, MDA's executive director. "ARRA funding through the Mississippi Job Protection through Energy Economic Development Program provides Mississippi companies with the support they need to be more energy efficient, thus reducing operating costs. This leads to stabilizing current employment levels and, ultimately, will create new jobs."

Under the program, eligible companies will be able to install energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits, such as lighting, HVAC, industrial systems and other items, yielding significant energy and cost savings. Grantees represent a cross-section of Mississippi's

business community: small businesses, large manufacturers and minority, woman-owned and veteran-owned firms from around the state. These companies are expected to see a combined estimated annual energy savings of nearly \$3 million.

Through ARRA, the SEP provides \$40.4 million to Mississippi for programs related to energy efficient buildings, market transformation and technology deployment and job protection through energy economic development. In Mississippi, the SEP provides assistance to both public and private entities to move the state toward greater energy efficiency, independence and sustainability while creating and preserving Mississippi jobs.

To view a full list of the grant recipients or for more information about this or other energy-related stimulus programs, visit <http://stimulus.mississippi.org>.

Council Annual Membership Meeting to be Held in January

The Itawamba County Development Council has scheduled its annual membership meeting for Thursday evening, January 14. Beginning at 6 p.m. at the Itawamba Community College Fulton Student Services Building, the featured guest speaker will be Mr. Mike Tagert, administrator of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Authority headquartered in Columbus.

During the dinner meeting the council will also be honoring the recipients of the businesses of the year for 2009. To be honored will be JESCO, Inc. (large business of the year) and K.C. Construction (small business of the year).

Invitations have been mailed to all current council members and members are encouraged to return their postage-paid RSVP card to the council. Reservations may also be made by calling the council at 862-4571 or by email at icdc@itawamba.com.

"We invite all the members to come out and enjoy an evening of fellowship, good food and a chance to learn what all the council is doing to promote Itawamba County, Mississippi throughout the world," says Greg Deakle, council director.



TALL SHIPS IN ITAWAMBA



On December 13 and 14, Itawamba County saw some interesting visitors. Replicas of Christopher Columbus' Nina and Pinta sailed down the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, stopping at Midway Marina just north of Fulton. The two ships were on their way south to Pensacola, Florida. Owned by the organization, The Columbus Foundation of the British Virgin Islands, these most interesting vessels brought out quite a few onlookers along the banks of the waterway.



Construction of the new Holiday Inn Express on South Adams Street in Fulton is progressing quickly. This new four-story state-of-the-art facility will be a welcome addition to the Itawamba County business

community generating more tax revenue for both the City of Fulton and Itawamba County.

Study Released on the Importance of Broadband to People With Disabilities

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce in December released a paper on the impact of Broadband on people with disabilities, as part of its series of studies detailing the benefits of broadband technology. The paper also offers guidance to policymakers as they examine broadband issues, including how to craft a national broadband plan and how to implement the broadband-related provisions in this year's economic stimulus bill.

"Broadband enables a range of social, economic, and health-related benefits to be delivered in an affordable, convenient, and effective manner," said

William L. Kovacs, U.S. Chamber senior vice president for Environment, Technology, and Regulatory Affairs. "In particular, broadband and broadband-enabled technologies have the potential to greatly assist people with disabilities."

Over the past two years, the telecommunications industry has invested over \$120 billion in broadband infrastructure. It will take up to \$350 billion to make broadband universally available in the United States, according to the Federal Communications Commission's Broadband Task Force. Yet, even where broadband is available, a large number of people with disabilities remain offline for a variety of reasons, according to the study. Therefore, in addition to broadband availability, the paper also examines broadband awareness and demand, adoption, and use of broadband by people with disabilities. A broadband connection helps people with disabilities participate in a wide range of activities and pursuits, including employment opportunities, health-related research, and community participation.

"The ability to engage in e-commerce, pursue online training, telecommute, or establish a small business are just some of the ways that broadband provides economic opportunities for people with disabilities," said Kovacs. "Additionally, broadband enables life-enhancing telemedicine services like in-home monitoring and can lower healthcare costs by improving access to information and reducing travel costs."

The study was authored by Charles M. Davidson and Michael J. Santorelli of the Advanced Communications Law & Policy Institute at New York Law School. For more information visit: www.uschamber.com/telecom.

Council Stays Busy Supporting Local Organizations

The Itawamba County Development Council hosts scores of meetings and special programs during each month of the year. From historic preservation meetings to health fairs and community planning meetings, the council works hard to be at the forefront in promoting community involvement. With its founding purpose of enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Itawamba County by promoting economic development through industry, business education, agriculture, recreation, tourism and unity among its communities and people. ICDC, as the council is known to the citizens of our county, serves as the development authority and chamber of commerce for the county and its municipalities.



Romona Edge, county director of the Mississippi Extension Service is shown being interviewed by NBC affiliate Channel 9 News at a recent health fair held at the ICDC building. The council co-sponsors many such types of events on a regular basis.

The council has many exciting plans to enhance its work with not only promoting Itawamba County, but working with other organizations for the betterment of Itawamba County. Please help the council recruit new members and support so that its work helping others can continue to grow and prosper.

ICDC ANNUAL MEETING
Thursday Evening, January 14, 2010
Itawamba Community College
Fulton Student Services Building
Dinner Meeting Begins at 6 p.m.

Special Guest Speaker
Mr. Mike Tagert, Administrator
Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway
Development Authority
Columbus, Mississippi