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This news release is issued on behalf of NEAN members.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nebraska Energy Assistance Network Partners with Nebraska Head Start to Help 1,000 Nebraska Households ‘Get a Head Start on Energy’

LINCOLN, Neb., Sept. 26, 2008 – The Nebraska Energy Assistance Network (NEAN) and Nebraska Head Start agencies are partnering to provide education and materials to Head Start clients on ways to use energy efficiently.

The rollout by Head Start of NEAN’s “Get a Head Start on Energy” program is under way now through May to 1,000 Nebraska households statewide.

“As the cost of living continues to increase, the need for energy assistance is expected to rise,” said Judi Martin, coordinator, Community Support /Consumer Relations, Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) and NEAN chair. “‘Get a Head Start on Energy’ provides information about resources to help families experiencing financial difficulties manage their energy needs and costs.”

NEAN is a statewide coalition of utilities, human service and governmental agencies and community leaders. It created and funded the “Get a Head Start on Energy” program Head Start professionals are using for in-home, hands-on instruction with their clients.

Along with the training, Head Start clients receive a home energy-efficiency starter kit of materials that are relatively inexpensive and simple to use. The starter kit contains items such as weatherstripping, electrical outlet insulators, compact fluorescent lamps and low-flow shower heads.

“NEAN and Head Start are addressing the need for energy efficiency education for Nebraskans who need assistance by providing education to conserve energy,” said Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman. “Using energy more efficiently is something all of us can do, and benefits the state as a whole.”

The Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), Nebraska Environmental Trust, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and other NEAN members provided grants to develop the “Get a Head Start on Energy” program. Additionally, NPPD, through its Domestic Energy and Research Initiatives, funded the production of educational DVDs and the purchase of energy efficiency starter kits. Other NEAN member utilities contributed resources for English and Spanish curriculum development, training materials and energy-saving booklets from the U.S. Department of Energy.

“Get a Head Start on Energy” is similar to the 2007 NEAN educational program that distributed more than 800

energy-saving education kits primarily to senior citizens. That program was funded by OPPD's Energy Saving Potential initiative.

The mission of Nebraska Energy Assistance Network is to assist Nebraskans with their energy needs through education, advocacy and partnerships. NEAN welcomes partnership opportunities with health and human services agencies and community and neighborhood groups on this program. More information is available at www.nebraskaenergyassistance.com

Nebraska Energy Assistance Network Members:

Utilities – Black Hills Energy, Cedar Knox Public Power District, Dawson Public Power District, Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, Loup Power District, Metropolitan Utilities District, Nebraska Propane Gas Association, Nebraska Public Power District, North Central Public Power District, NorthWestern Energy, Omaha Public Power District, SourceGas, Stanton County Public Power District.

Government/Education – Nebraska Energy Office, Nebraska Head Start Association, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Nebraska Public Service Commission, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension.

Community Action Agencies – Blue Valley Community Action, Central Nebraska Community Service Inc., Goldenrod Hills Community Action, Lincoln Action Program.

Nonprofits – American Red Cross - Heartland Chapter, The Salvation Army, United Way of the Midlands, Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska.

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