

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric to assist Ellingson Companies with Expansion Project

Ellingson Companies in West Concord will receive financial assistance to expand its operations with a zero-interest loan from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric. Steele-Waseca is one of 28 organizations in 11 states to receive funding through USDA Rural Development's Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL) program.

Steele-Waseca was awarded \$740,000 through the REDL program, which awards loans to rural utility and telephone cooperatives. Steele-Waseca will re-lend the funds at zero interest to Ellingson Companies to assist with costs in constructing and equipping a new 20,000 square foot E/One Sewer Pump Service Center. The project is expected to create or save 21 jobs in the region.

"This is a major investment on the part of Ellingson Companies and the financing through Rural Development and Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric will be extremely beneficial," said Roger Ellingson, president of Ellingson companies. "We're very grateful for everyone that played a role in making this project happen."

The E/One Sewer is a low pressure sewer system that is powered by E/One grinder pumps. A low pressure sewer system consists of a network of pressure pipes and grinder pumps, which may be installed at each home site. The grinder pumps collect all of the wastewater from the home and grind it into slurry. The wastewater is then pumped to a larger sewer main or directly to a wastewater treatment plant.

The total cost of the new facility and equipment is expected to be around \$2.5 million and is targeted for completion by August 2009.

Steele-Waseca is a Touchtone Energy Cooperative providing electricity to over 9,000 members in nine counties. In addition to Ellingson Drainage, Steele-Waseca has used the REDL program to finance other Economic Development projects.

"Ellingson Companies is a tremendous local company that is making a significant positive impact on the local economy," said Syd Briggs, general manager of Steele-Waseca. "We are excited to have this opportunity to join Ellingson and invest in the West Concord community. The Rural Economic Development Loan program through Rural Development supports projects like this in our smaller communities and helps create and save jobs."

Rural Development fosters growth in homeownership, finances business development, and supports the creation of critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available by calling the local office in Austin at (507) 437-8247, ext. 4, or at www.rurdev.usda.gov/mn.