



## Midwest Energy Community Fund Information and Guidelines (Revised April 2012)

The Midwest Energy Community Fund is funded and governed by Midwest Energy and supports activities or investments in Midwest Energy's retail electric and natural gas communities or activities beneficial to retail customers immediately outside\* the service area.

\* For example, a school or hospital, not in Midwest Energy's service area, may have a significant number of Midwest Energy customers benefiting from its service.

### Please use the following as a guide.

- Requests must be for community or civic betterment projects or events of a non-profit, non-commercial nature. Formal charitable status or 501(c)(3) designation is not required of applicants, but the applicant must affirm the funds will be used for the purpose(s) requested.
- Grants range from \$50 to \$1,000.
- Limit of one grant per project or event.
- Broad community benefit projects are recommended over narrowly focused projects.
- If funds are requested for tangible items, long-lived community assets or their improvement are preferred over expendable items (fireworks, event prizes, etc.)
- Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to issue a local press release regarding their project and the Community Fund grant.

### Funding Parameters

The Midwest Energy Community Fund **will** accept applications to fund the following activities, but others may be considered by the Area Advisory Committees:

- Education, art, music or theatrical programs (including performer stipends) at public or private schools, or provided through community organizations. No more than 25% of funds will be awarded to K-12 school or classroom projects excluding Project Prom/Project Graduation events. Project Prom/Project Graduation type events will receive \$50 each.
- Public library programs or improvements.
- Leadership or business clubs or events sponsored by a school or community organization
- Community development.
- Museum, park or community center improvements (including teen, senior and recreation centers and similar facilities for public use).
- Equipment for athletic teams that remains relatively fixed in place such as soccer goals, basketball backboards, scoreboards, swimming pool equipment, etc.
- Safety education and other youth programs.
- Seed money leveraged to raise additional funds for a community project that is consistent with the Funding Parameters. For example, a Community Fund grant might be used for a benefit meal that is part of a community park improvement fund raising event.



The Midwest Energy Community Fund **will not** accept applications to fund the following:

- General operating, tax or payroll expenses for the organization
- Individual or group registration fees or travel expenses
- Gifts for individuals
- Scholarship programs or individual scholarships
- Uniforms, personal athletic equipment, clothing, or general sponsorships for little leagues, traveling teams, youth clubs, etc.
- Political purposes or advocacy
- Advertising
- Meals, snacks, beverages and food pantry inventory. Exceptions may be made for meals/snacks that are part of a fund-raising event or community service project whose objectives are consistent with the Funding Parameters and restrictions.
- Projects of religious denominations, unless the expenditure is directed to the benefit of the community at large (e.g., all youth, or all elderly, etc.) and is not limited or offered primarily to members of that denomination
- Repairs and improvements to private property or that of religious denominations
- Organizations or programs outside Midwest Energy's service territory, unless a direct benefit is provided to a significant number of Midwest Energy customers
- Medical research or disease prevention causes or individual medical expenses
- Projects substantially completed before the grant application deadline
- Community foundations, unless the application designates a specific project

## **Application Process**

1. There are two application periods each year. Deadlines are March 1 and September 1. To be considered for funding within an application period, application must be received by Midwest Energy, or post marked, on or prior to the application deadline. Deadlines for applications are determined by Midwest Energy and are subject to change.
2. An Area Advisory Committee\*\*, within applicant's respective region, will review and forward award recommendations to Midwest Energy. Dates for Committee meetings will be determined by Midwest Energy.
3. All applications must include details of how the funds will be used. For example "to purchase 200 books for the summer reading program" is acceptable detail, while "expenses for the summer reading program" is too vague. **Please be brief and specific.**
4. Midwest Energy will notify all applicants as to the status of their requests and forward payment for approved donations in a timely manner after the Area Advisory Committee reviews the applications. Midwest Energy reserves the right to reject a Committee recommendation.
5. In subsequent rounds, the organization requesting funds may be required to document that the funds previously received were used in the manner that they were requested. If future applications are anticipated, records should be kept for this purpose.

*\*\*Each of five regions (Colby, Great Bend, Hays, Phillipsburg and Scott City) will have an Area Advisory Committee with one or two members being Midwest Energy employees and at least five additional members being Midwest Energy customers. Each Committee will make a reasonable attempt to spread the funds equitably within the geographic region it represents.*