

Businesses get \$1M for green technologies

Raleigh, N.C.

Thirteen companies have won inaugural grants of up to \$100,000 from the North Carolina Green Business Fund.

The fund, which was created by state lawmakers last year, is designed to help small businesses with fewer than 100 employees develop and market promising green and alternative energy technologies.

We have all the right assets to be a leader in going green in North Carolina great agricultural diversity, a booming biotech sector, and world-class entrepreneurs and researchers, Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, who proposed the fund, said in a statement. This fund will jump start efforts to build a green economy that's good for business and the environment.

Eighty-five small businesses filed applications seeking nearly \$7 million in funds, and an advisory committee of scientists, engineers and other qualified experts whittled down the list to select the winners.

Here is the list of grant recipients:

- * Rain Water Solutions of Raleigh, \$18,000 to develop a rain barrel manufacturing process that will allow mass production to meet increasing demand and provide an inexpensive, appealing option to consumers desiring to collect rainwater.
- * Blue Ridge Biofuels of Asheville, \$77,737 to develop and commercialize a purification method to convert low-quality fatty acids into biofuels.
- * Organofuels of Asheville, \$81,944 to manufacture an algae-based fuel for gasoline engines.
- * Ecocurrent of Raleigh, \$100,000 for a process that converts hog manure to electric power in an economically viable manner, while producing valuable byproducts such as fertilizer and building materials.
- * Evans Environmental of Wilson, \$75,000 to remove residual water in the final stage of biodiesel production. The process will facilitate increased production to commercial-grade biodiesel by 300 percent.
- * Alganomics of Southport, \$60,000 to produce reliable, environmentally responsible, natural and renewable bioproducts from algal sources. The primary bioproduct is extracted oil/fatty acids for use as a biodiesel fuel feedstock.
- * Kyma Technologies of Raleigh, \$60,000 to work with researchers at North Carolina State University to develop an efficient, lower-cost electric switch to be used in a broad

range of applications, including hybrid and all electric vehicles, legacy and renewable electric grids and power supplies in general.

- * 3F LLC of Raleigh, \$100,000 to develop a new natural fiber-reinforced concrete formula. The resulting concrete will be lighter weight, yet stronger.
- * Piedmont Biofuels of Pittsboro, \$75,000 to develop a cavitation reactor to produce biodiesel fuel. The process uses less energy than traditional methods, has a much smaller physical footprint and causes a more complete reaction with higher fuel yields.
- * Nextreme Thermal Solutions of Durham, \$57,319 to manufacture a thermoelectric power generator capable of converting waste heat into usable electrical power.
- * Nanotech Labs of Yadkinville, \$70,000 to develop and commercialize an energy storage device that has high volume capacity but small overall dimensions.
- * Phasetek of Greensboro, \$75,000 to develop a class of thermal-efficient building material for transfer and storage building wallboards.
- * Sencera of Charlotte, \$100,000 to open a photovoltaic solar cell production facility in North Carolina based on a new thin-film manufacturing technology.

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