

**NEW ENERGY PROGRAM PROVING
BENEFICIAL TO WOOD PRODUCTS INDUSTRY**

Story by Ross Finney, RHT Energy Solutions

(Note: SOTIA first reported on The Energy Trust of Oregon Production Efficiency Program in Nov. of 2003.)

SOTIA member company **RHT Energy Solutions** closed out 2003 having qualified 50 energy efficiency projects in the Energy Trust of Oregon Production Efficiency Program. The projects, representing over \$9.8 million in equipment and related installation costs, are based in manufacturing facilities located in **Pacific Power** utility territory throughout southern Oregon.

Forest products industry representatives qualifying for program incentives included **Boise Cascade**, Cascade Wood Products, C&D Lumber, Collins Products, Jeld Wen, Murphy Veneer, Roseburg Forest Products, Rogue Valley Door, **SierraPine (Medite Division)**, Southport Forest Products, **Timber Products Company** and **Veneer Profiles**. (SOTIA member companies with emphasis)

Projects range from air compressor upgrades to hydraulic press-pump retrofits. The common variable is kilowatt-hour savings over the equipment being retrofitted or replaced.

RHT Energy has reserved \$5.7 billion in Energy Trust program incentives towards the projects, representing over 58% of the total costs! Estimated combined annual energy savings total more than 48 million kilowatt-hours per year, which translates into over \$1.5 in annual utility cost savings to the customers. Regional manufacturers will be implementing the projects by the end of 2004, with the Energy Trust incentive payouts coming at project completion.

"We see the advantages of this Energy Trust program as being three-fold," said RHT owner Buzz Thielemann. "First, we are helping to meet a mandate from the Oregon legislature to invest 'public purpose funding' for energy efficiency and conservation. Second, we are enabling Oregon manufacturing businesses to reduce their operating costs, and finally, in many cases the new

equipment enables facilities to increase productivity. Combined, these factors help our regional manufacturing sector to become more cost competitive in national and global markets - **at a time when many American companies are moving manufacturing operations overseas.**" (Emphasis added) Through the program, companies take advantage of special financial incentives that reduce a project payback period to 18 months, up to a maximum of 50 percent of project costs. Many projects also qualify for Oregon Business Energy Tax Credits, which help to further reduce acquisition costs for energy efficient equipment.

Last summer, RHT received the contract to deliver the production efficiency program services in southern Oregon. RHT has a skilled staff of professionals, including mechanical and electrical engineers, to analyze energy use in manufacturing facilities, identify opportunities for energy savings, and recommend improvement that fit unique needs. RHT staff present program criteria on study findings to key decision makers in conjunction with facility engineers and operations managers. Once projects are approved, RHT project managers oversee the installation of equipment and verify it meets the study specifications. Finally, RHT completes all the paperwork necessary to ensure timely payment of program incentives, as well as applications for Business Energy Tax Credits.

The Production Efficiency Program continues forward into 2004. Contact RHT Energy Solutions at 541-770-5884 or e-mail them at info@rhtenergy.com for more information about how they can help you access Energy Trust incentives. For more information about the Energy Trust of Oregon visit www.energytrust.org or call 1-541-510-6800.

AFRC NEWS, April 2, 2004 reports: Three new lawsuits; 1) League of Wilderness Defenders and Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project filed against the Metolius Basin Project, 2) Center for Biological Diversity and Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign will soon file against U.S. Fish & Wildlife for not giving ESA protection to the California Spotted Owl, and 3) Defenders of Wildlife will soon file against the Healthy Forests Initiative. Does anyone want to amend NEPA?

U.S. solid wood exports were \$6 billion in 1999, with 36 percent leaving from the East Coast, 37 percent shipping from the West Coast and 27 percent departing from other ports around the nation. Ports with the highest percentage of shipments are in Washington, New York & Oregon.