

Department of Energy

§ 452.2

(2) Setting forth the calculation of the approved amount of the incentive payment; and

(3) Stating the amount of accrued energy, measured in kilowatt-hours, for each qualified renewable energy facility, if any, and the energy source for same.

(g) *Disqualification.* If the application does not meet the requirements of this part or some of the kilowatt-hours claimed in the application are disallowed as unqualified, the Deciding Official shall issue a written notice denying the application in whole or in part with an explanation of the basis for denial.

[60 FR 36964, July 19, 1995, as amended at 71 FR 46387, Aug. 14, 2006]

§ 451.10 Administrative appeals.

(a) In order to exhaust administrative remedies, an applicant who receives a notice denying an application in whole or in part shall appeal, on or before 45 days from date of the notice issued by the DOE Deciding Official, to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585, in accordance with the procedures set forth in subpart C of 10 CFR part 1003.

(b) If an applicant does not appeal under paragraph (a) of this section, the determination of the DOE Deciding Official shall become final for DOE and judicially unreviewable.

(c) If an applicant appeals on a timely basis under paragraph (a) of this section, the decision and order of the Office of Hearings and Appeals shall be final for DOE.

(d) If the Office of Hearings and Appeals orders an incentive payment, the DOE Deciding Official shall send a copy of such order to the DOE Finance Office with a request to pay.

PART 452—PRODUCTION INCENTIVES FOR CELLULOSIC BIOFUELS

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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*; 42 U.S.C. 16251.

SOURCE: 74 FR 52871, Oct. 15, 2009, unless otherwise noted.

§ 452.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) This part sets forth the standards, policies, and procedures that the Department of Energy uses for receiving, evaluating, and awarding bids in reverse auctions of production incentive payments for cellulosic biofuels under section 942 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16251).

(b) Part 1024 of chapter X of title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations shall not apply to actions taken under this part.

§ 452.2 Definitions.

As used in this part:

Cellulosic biofuel means any liquid fuel produced from cellulosic feedstocks.

Cellulosic feedstock means any lignocellulosic feedstock as defined by EPAct, section 932(a)(2).

Commercially significant quantity means 10 million gallons or more of cellulosic biofuels produced in one year.

DOE means the U.S. Department of Energy.

Eligible biofuels producer means a business association, including but not limited to a sole proprietorship, partnership, joint venture, corporation, or other business entity that owns and operates, or plans to own and operate, an eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility and that meets all other eligibility requirements that are conditions on the receipt of production incentives under this part.

Eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility means a facility—

(1) Located in the United States (including U.S. territories and possessions);

(2) Which meets all applicable Federal and State permitting requirements;

(3) Employs a demonstrated refining technology; and

(4) Meets any relevant financial criteria established by the Secretary.

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EPAct 2005 means the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Public Law 109-58 (August 8, 2005).

Open window means the period during each reverse auction, as specified in an associated solicitation, during which DOE accepts bids for production incentives under this part.

Secretary means the Secretary of Energy.

§ 452.3 Solicitations.

The reverse auction process commences with the issuance of a solicitation by DOE. DOE will publish a solicitation in the FEDERAL REGISTER and shall post the solicitation on its website at *www.eere.energy.gov* no later than 60 days before the bidding in a reverse auction under this part commences. The solicitation shall:

- (a) Invite interested persons and businesses to submit pre-qualification statements;
- (b) Set forth the terms on which bids will be accepted;
- (c) Specify the open window for bidding; and
- (d) Specify the date by which successful bidders will be required to file pre-auction eligibility submissions.

§ 452.4 Eligibility requirements.

- (a) *Pre-auction eligibility submissions.*
 - (1) Entities that intend to participate in a reverse auction, within the time period stated in the relevant solicitation, must file a pre-auction eligibility submission that provides all information requested in the applicable solicitation to which it is responding, including an implementation plan.
 - (2) Each pre-auction eligibility submission's implementation plan must, at a minimum:
 - (i) Demonstrate that the filing party owns and operates or plans to own and operate an eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility;
 - (ii) Identify the site or proposed site for the filing party's eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility;
 - (iii) Demonstrate that the cellulosic biofuel to be produced for purposes of receiving an award either currently is suitable for widespread general use as a transportation fuel or will be suitable for such use in a timeframe and in sufficient volumes to significantly con-

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tribute to the goal of 1 billion gallons of refined cellulosic biofuel by August 2015.

(iv) Provide audited or *pro forma* financial statements for the latest 12 month period; and

(v) Identify one or more proposed sources of financing for the construction or expansion of the filing party's eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility.

(b) *Notification of pre-auction eligibility status.* DOE shall notify each entity that files a pre-auction eligibility submission of its acceptance or rejection no later than 15 days before the reverse auction for which the submission was made. A DOE decision constitutes final agency action and is conclusive.

(c) *Progress reports.* Within one year after the reverse auction in which a bidder successfully competed, the bidder must submit a progress report that includes all additional information required by the solicitation in which the bidder submitted a successful bid and which demonstrates that the bidder has:

- (1) Acquired the site where its proposed eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility is or will be located;
- (2) Obtained secure financing commitments for the plant or expansion thereof, as necessary to produce cellulosic biofuels; and
- (3) Entered into a written engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contract for design and construction of the eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility; such EPC contract must provide for completion of construction of the eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility such that operations at the plant or plant expansion will commence within three years of the reverse auction in which the bidder successfully competed.

(d) *Production agreement.* Within 90 days after submission of its progress report under paragraph (c) of this section, the successful bidder must enter into an agreement with DOE which requires the bidder to begin production of commercially significant quantities of cellulosic biofuels, at the eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility that was the subject of the relevant bid, not later than three years from the date of the acceptance of the successful bid.

(e) *Confirmation of continuing eligibility.* After receiving the progress report described in the paragraph (e) of the section and upon confirmation by DOE that the successful bidder has entered into a production agreement with DOE, as described in paragraph (d) of this section, DOE will confirm to the bidder that it continues to meet the eligibility requirements of this part.

(f) *Contractual condition on eligibility.*

(1) As a condition of the receipt of an award under this part, a successful bidder in a reverse auction under this part must demonstrate that it has fulfilled the terms of its production agreement entered into with DOE pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section.

(2) As a condition of continuing to receive production incentive payments under this part, a bidder that has entered into a production agreement with DOE must annually submit to DOE, by a commercially reasonable date specified by DOE, verification of the bidder's production volumes for the prior calendar year. Within 90 days of the submission of such verification, DOE shall notify the successful bidder whether the bidder has fulfilled the terms of the production agreement and shall make payment of any production incentive awards then outstanding for the one year period covered by the verified data submission.

§ 452.5 Bidding procedures.

DOE shall conduct an electronic reverse auction through a limited duration single bid per producer auction process open only to pre-auction eligible cellulosic biofuels producers. The following procedures shall be used:

(a) DOE shall accept only electronic bids received from pre-auction eligible cellulosic biofuels producers during the open window established in the solicitation. The open window shall consist of a single continuous period of at least four hours for each auction.

(b) Bids shall identify an estimated annual production amount from an eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility on a per gallon, site, entity, and year specific basis for a consecutive six year production period. A bid also may be submitted for additional incentives for uncovered production volumes at a

site where an award was made in an earlier auction round.

(c) All bids must set forth the methodology used to derive the estimates of annual production volumes covered by the bid and the bid shall be calculated on a gasoline equivalent volumetric basis using the lower heating Btu value of the fuel compared to the lower heating Btu value of gasoline.

(d) All bids will be confidential until 45 days after the close of the window for submission of bids for the reverse auction.

(e) Bid evaluation and incentive awards selection procedures include the following:

(1) After DOE evaluates the bids received during the open window, it shall, within 45 days following the close of the open window for submission of bids for the reverse auction, announce on DOE's website and by direct mail the names of the successful bidders and the terms of their bids.

(2) DOE shall issue awards for the bid production amounts beginning with the bidder that submitted the bid for the lowest level of production incentive on a per gallon basis.

(3) In the event of a tie among the lowest bids, preference will be given to the lowest tied bidder based on DOE's evaluation of the extent to which the tied bids meet the following criteria:

(i) Demonstrates outstanding potential for local and regional economic development;

(ii) Includes agricultural producers or cooperatives of agricultural producers as equity partners in the ventures; and

(iii) Has a strategic agreement in place to fairly reward feedstock suppliers.

(4) In the event more than one lowest tied bid equally meets the standards in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, the award will be distributed equally on a per capita basis among those lowest tied bidders meeting the standards.

§ 452.6 Incentive award terms and limitations.

(a) *Amount of incentive.* Subject to the availability of appropriated funds and the limitations in paragraph (c) of this section, an eligible cellulosic biofuels producer selected to receive an award

shall receive the amount of the production incentive on the per gallon basis requested in the auction solicitation for each gallon produced and sold by the entity during the first six years of operation of its eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility.

(b) *Failure to commence production.* Except in the circumstance of a force majeure event, as solely determined by DOE, failure by an eligible cellulosic biofuels producer that made a successful bid to commence production of cellulosic biofuels, at the eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility that was the subject of the successful bid, by the end of the third year after the close of submission of the open window of bids for the reverse auction in which it submitted a successful bid, shall result in immediate revocation of DOE's award to that producer.

(c) *Failure of the successful bidder to meet annual production obligations.* Except in the circumstance of a force majeure event, as solely determined by DOE, a successful bidder's failure to produce at least 50 percent of the volumes specified in its production agreement by December 31 of any year covered by the bid shall result in immediate revocation of DOE's award; if the successful bidder produces 50 percent or more of the volumes set forth in the production agreement on an annual basis by December 31 of any year covered by the agreement, any production shortfall will be carried forward and added to the successful bidder's production obligations for next year covered by the agreement.

(d) *Shortfalls remaining at the end of the production period.* If, for any reason, by December 31 of the last year of the production agreement, the bidder has failed to produce the total production volumes for all years covered by the agreement, any such remaining shortfall shall be awarded to the bidder with the next lowest bid in the auction round for which the award was made. If, however, the next best bidder is unable to enter into a production agreement with DOE within 30 days after being notified of its award, the shortfall shall be allocated instead to the next reverse auction.

(e) *Incentive award limitations.* The following limits shall apply to awards

of cellulosic biofuels production incentives under this part:

(1) During the first four years after the commencement of the program, the incentive shall be limited to \$1.00 per gallon. For purposes of this limitation, the program shall be deemed to have commenced on the date that the first solicitation for a reverse auction is issued;

(2) A per gallon cap over the remaining lifetime of the program of \$.95 per gallon provided that—

(i) This cap shall be lowered by \$.05 each year commencing the first year after annual cellulosic biofuels production in the United States exceeds 1 billion gallons;

(ii) Not more than 25 percent of the funds committed within each reverse auction shall be awarded to any single project;

(iii) Not more than \$100 million in production incentives shall be awarded in any one calendar year; and

(iv) Not more than \$1 billion in production incentives shall be awarded over the lifetime of the program.

(f) *Participation in subsequent auctions.* A successful bidder in a reverse auction under this part may participate in subsequent reverse auctions if the incentives sought will assist the addition of plant production capacity for the eligible cellulosic biofuels production facility associated with its previously successful bid.

(g) *Transferability of awards.* A production incentive award under this part may be transferred to a successor entity at the same production facility for which the award was made, provided that the successor entity meets all eligibility requirements of this part, including execution of an agreement with DOE to commence production of cellulosic biofuels in commercially significant quantities not later than three years of the date that bidding closes on the reverse auction in which the predecessor entity submitted a successful bid.

PART 455—GRANT PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS AND BUILDINGS OWNED BY UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC CARE INSTITUTIONS

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