



Ken Field
Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Heat Pump Reality

Last week I explained how a heat pump works in theory. I hope I didn't bore you too badly. This week I will talk about why heat pumps are not the greatest thing to heat with.

One reason there are so many heat pump systems in use are because they are air conditioners too. Many years ago people would put in hot water heat and then need a second system for air conditioning.

That is almost too expensive to do anymore although it is still them most comfortable combination by far. Heat pumps are not really appropriate for our climate. For example a 24000btu heat pump only produces 24,000 btus until the outdoor temperature goes below 47°. Then it starts losing capacity. At 15° it makes about 13000 btus. So when you need more heat, you get less heat. That's because there is just less heat in the outside air to squeeze into your home. Then because it is operating at a low temperature it builds up ice on the outdoor coil and has to defrost occasionally. Defrost mode is just turning the air conditioning on for a few minutes and taking heat from the house and using it to melt the ice on the outdoor unit. Sort of like the old Shirley Temple movies where they went up 4 steps then back down 2 then up 3 and back one. It's hard to get ahead operating like that. But the killer is the backup heat. Almost all heat pumps have electric backup heaters inside the fan unit. They put your air fryer to shame. These things are power hunger and they are the reason your electric bill is \$500 per month. Not because of the heat pump, but the backup heater. Estimating \$3/hour of electric use for the backup heater is not out of the question. If there are 720 hours in a month and your backup heater is running for a large part of that time it makes up a huge part of the electric bill.

You just need to know what you are dealing with. There are other forms of backup for heat pumps but the electric heater is by far the easiest, fastest, and least expensive to install. That's why they were promoted by the electric companies in the first place and now why they are promoting them again. There is truly nothing "green" about a heat pump. It just moves the cost of producing heat from gas and oil in your basement to a generating station somewhere remote to you. Of course you pay for that convenience and it's not cheap at all.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

Grow NorCo Grants Awarded

By Becky Bartlett

EASTON - Lamont McClure and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) announce that County Council approved \$780,900 for 58 Grow NORCO grants at their December 1st meeting. Grow NORCO Program grants are available to Northampton County non-profit organizations and municipalities. Grants of up to \$50,000 can be used for Capital Improvements, Façade Programs, Operations and Community Planning. All projects must be completed by December 31, 2023.

"The County of Northampton appreciates the hard work provided by our non-profit organizations and municipalities," says Lamont McClure. "It's important that the County continues to support their contributions which improve public health and economic development."

	Project	Grant
Allen Township	Speed Alert Radar Message Signs	\$ 9,000
ArtsQuest	PNC Parking Lot & Light Fixtures	\$25,000
Bangor Borough	Lighting & Safety Upgrades at Borough Parks	\$20,000
Bath Borough	Parks Master Plan	\$20,000
Bethlehem Economic Development Corp	Greenway Stairs Mural	\$ 7,500
Bethlehem Emergency Sheltering, Inc	2022-2023 Emergency Shelter Operations Support	\$20,000
Bethlehem Township	Park Pavilion Roofs	\$25,000
Bloom for Women	Vehicle Replacement	\$15,000
Bushkill Township	Police Pole Building	\$15,000
Bushkill Twp Volunteer Fire Company	Pavilion Construction	\$15,000
City of Easton	Sitgreaves St. Walkability & Community Improvements	\$25,000
Community Bike Works	Salary & Benefits Earn a Bike Program	\$ 5,000
Community Fire Company of Forks Township	Fire Training Facility Repairs	\$40,000
Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor	Trail Amenity & Interpretation Improvements	\$ 4,500
East Allen Township Volunteer Ambulance Corp	Building Improvements	\$15,000
East Bangor Borough	Legacy Pavilion Restoration Project	\$15,000
Easton Area Community Center	Purchase of cubicles & desks	\$ 7,000
Family Connection of Easton, Inc.	Bilingual Family Support Specialist Salary Support	\$ 7,500
Freemansburg Borough	Construction of an Amphitheater	\$15,000
Godfrey Daniels	Replacement of Carpet & Laminatate Flooring	\$ 7,100
Greater Community Development Corporation	Emergency Shelter Renovations- flooring/restrooms	\$11,000
Greater Easton Development Partnership	Easton Public Market HVAC Replacement	\$25,000
Greater Valley YMCA #1	Bethlehem Childcare Renovation Phase III	\$15,000
Greater Valley YMCA #2	Nazareth Branch Operational Support	\$ 7,500
Greater Valley YMCA #4	Improvement/Expansion of programming Slate Belt Branch	\$ 7,500
Hanover Township	Forklift Purchase	\$ 9,500
Hellertown Borough	Reinhard's Park Improvements	\$15,000
Historic Bethlehem Museum & Sites	Kemerer Museum Exterior Painting & Restoration	\$10,000
Jacobsville Historical Society	Installation of new heat pump systems & security upgrades	\$15,000
Lehigh Township	Enhanced security of township buildings	\$14,000
Lehigh Township Volunteer Fire Company #1	LED sign purchase & installation	\$ 3,000
LifePath Foundation	New flooring for Bethlehem day services program	\$10,000
Lower Mt Beth Township	Centerfield playground & tennis court upgrades	\$20,000
Lower Nazareth Township	Municipal building generator	\$20,000
Lower Saucon Township	Purchase of security cameras	\$15,000
Miller Keystone Blood Center	Tube Sealer purchase	\$ 4,500
Minsi Trails Council #502, Boy Scouts of America	Inner-city scouting in Northampton County	\$ 5,000
Moravian Historical Society	Installation of track lighting on 3 rd floor of Whitefield House	\$ 4,400
National Museum of History	2 nd Floor expansion project – Phase 2b	\$20,000
Nazareth Borough	Rehabilitation & repaving of park basketball courts	\$25,000
Nazareth Economic Development Commission	2023 Façade Program	\$20,000
New Bethany, Inc.	Choice food pantry renovation	\$20,000
Northampton County Historical & Genealogical Society	Renovations/rehabilitation of Bachmann Publick House & Sigal Museum	\$20,000
Palmer Township	Parks & Open Space master design plan	\$20,000
Pen Argyl Borough	Weona Park Sign	\$10,000
Pennsylvania Playhouse	Flashing LED signs	\$ 2,800
Plainfield Township	Road Widener purchase	\$15,000
Project of Easton, Inc.	Parking lot improvements	\$10,000
Safe Harbor Easton Inc.	Salary & Operational support	\$10,000
Sights for Hope	Sight-guided transportation with visual impairments or blindness	\$10,000
Stephen's Place, Inc	Operational support	\$10,300
Suburban Emergency Medical Services	Salary & operational support for new position	\$10,000
Touchstone Theatre	Office wall repairs	\$ 5,100
United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley	Expansion of project Lifesaver Public Safety Program	\$ 7,000
Upper Mt Bethel Township	Sprinkle Park	\$10,000
Upper Nazareth Township	Technology upgrade	\$20,000
Via of the Lehigh Valley, Inc	Capital improvement projects	\$ 8,600
Walnutport Canal Association	Fence replacement around Locktender's House	\$ 3,100
		\$780,900

Boscola Announces \$256,000 Traffic Signal Technologies Grant For Lower Nazareth Township

By Joe Kelly

BETHLEHEM – State Senator Lisa M. Boscola announced today that Lower Nazareth Township has been awarded a \$256,000 state grant through the Traffic Signal Technologies Grant (TSTG) program for signal system upgrades and connection to PennDOT's unified command and control software along Route 248.

"The Traffic Signal Technologies Grant program was enacted earlier this year to provide much needed resources to local governments to assist with implementing technologies that will help ease traffic congestion and improve traffic flow in heavily traveled corridors such as Rt. 248 in Lower Nazareth Township," Senator Boscola stated. "It's critical that the Commonwealth partner with our municipalities to address traffic congestion issues and I am pleased that this state funding will allow Lower Nazareth Township to move forward on addressing issues along Route 248."

The Traffic Signal Technologies Grant program was created as part of Act 54 of 2022, enacted on July 11, 2022, which included \$5 million to provide grants to municipalities to install and maintain traffic signal technologies. The TSTG program is a reimbursement grant program for municipalities that is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

