

News Release

Independence Light & Power, Telecommunications

August 24, 2010

Contact: **Darrel Wenzel**
319-332-0100

IL&P,T and BCHC Work With USDA for Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund *Utility and USDA Provide BCHC with Zero Interest Loan*

Independence, Iowa, August 24 -- Independence Light & Power, Telecommunications (IL&P,T) has applied for and received a \$300,000 grant from the USDA to start a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) for local businesses.

The guidelines of the federal REDLG (Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant) requires IL&P,T to provide 20 percent of the total grant in matching funds or \$60,000 to the fund for a total economic development revolving fund in the amount of \$360,000. Buchanan County Health Center will be the first recipient of the RLF, which will be used to finance the overhead medical equipment in the new Emergency Room facility recently completed in Independence.

BCHC's payments on the loan will establish available funds for future economic development loans to Independence businesses from the Revolving Loan Fund. According to Darrel Wenzel, General Manager of IL&P,T, "Supplemental financing is a key component in driving economic development in rural communities. IL&P,T recognizes the importance of assisting local businesses and is working in conjunction with the USDA and the Buchanan County Economic Development Commission in establishing this economic development tool here in Independence."

"Helping to establish revolving loan funds is one of the most important ways our agency helps improve economic opportunities in rural Iowa," said Bill Menner, USDA Rural Development state director in Iowa. "There is no limit to the number of businesses that can be assisted or the

number of jobs created as these funds are continually revolved and lent back out. A revolving loan fund is truly a gift that keeps giving.”

Nate Clayberg, Director for Buchanan County Economic Development Commission quotes, “It is exciting to have another RLF available in our city to use as a tool in helping new and existing businesses grow in Independence, the USDA program that Independence Light and Power was able to take advantage of is great for the continued future of business here.”

“We are proud to live in a community where two public entities, like a power company and a hospital, can work together to create a financial resource that will have a lasting positive impact,” said Administrator Bob Richard. “We want to thank Independence Light & Power, Telecommunications for their past and continued partnership.”

As funds become available from BCHC’s repayment of the RLF, local businesses can contact BCEDC Director, Nate Clayberg, for additional details and applications for consideration of the Revolving Loan Funds. A loan committee will review all applications and make recommendations to the IL&P,T Board of Trustees for final approval.