

Montana

Business and Cooperative Services • Rural Energy for America Program

Improving Rural Communities, Business by Business

Glendive EyeCare is nestled in the heart of downtown Glendive, Montana, which is well-known by paleontologists and dinosaur enthusiasts as a treasure trove that is rich in history and archaeological findings.

Despite living in a semi-arid climate, the staff of this optometry business, which was founded in 1981, suffered from fluctuating workplace temperatures.

When asked about their antiquated heating and cooling system, Janette Bogar, Glendive EyeCare's Office Manager remarked, "We knew that our (1950's) furnace was going to die and to get parts was impossible. It was old, and huge, and we just knew it wasn't going to last. Plus, the girls were always too cold or hot, and it wasn't just in our area. It was up front and in the hallway too." So, in 2021, the company applied for funding through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and received a grant to install an energy-efficient system.

Through a \$13,619 REAP grant, the older building is now retrofitted with a smaller, programmable HVAC unit that can be set from on-or-offsite to adapt to Glendive's seasonality as well as Glendive EyeCare's work schedule and needs.

Prior to this funding, Bogar noted that the company was "just trying to keep the older building going." Now equipped with a state-of-the-art set-up, Glendive EyeCare no longer needs to worry about climate change within the building. And, in keeping in line with its desire to promote Earth-friendly practices, which includes offering eco-friendly contact lenses and sustainable eyewear, they can rest well knowing that they are helping lessen their carbon footprint on the outside too. The company is planning their next steps for disposing of the obsolete, room-sized, basement furnace and is making plans to disassemble and recycle this dinosaur. This energy-efficient investment was projected to save the business \$2,075 annually in energy bills, and 33,520 kilowatt hours (kWh) per year, reducing the company's energy usage by 27 percent.



Glendive, Montana, is home to Makoshika State Park, which is named after the Sioux word for badlands and is the historic home to the Hell Creek dinosaurs, including the T-Rex and triceratops.

Obligation Amount: \$13,619 (REAP grant)

Date of Obligation: April 2, 2021

Congressional District: Rosendale (MT 00); Senators Tester and Daines

Partners: None

Demographics: Glendive has a population of just over 5,300 people, with a median age of 36 years old.

Impact: This Rural Development investment was used to help Glendive Eyecare purchase and install new heating and cooling equipment to create energy-efficient options for their business.