

## **ITEM 147-1001-R0510**

### **Attachment – Background Information**

An ESCO, or Energy Service Company, is a business that develops, installs, and arranges financing for projects designed to improve the energy efficiency and maintenance costs for facilities over a seven to twenty year time period. ESCOs generally act as project developers for a wide range of tasks and assume the technical and performance risk associated with the project. Typically, they offer the following services:

- develop, design, and arrange financing for energy efficiency projects;
- install and maintain the energy efficient equipment involved;
- measure, monitor, and verify the project's energy savings; and
- assume the risk that the project will save the amount of energy guaranteed.

These services are bundled into the project's cost and are repaid through the dollar savings generated from the project. Typically, the comprehensive energy efficiency retrofits inherent in ESCO projects require a large initial capital investment and offer a relatively long payback period. The customer's debt payments are tied to the energy savings offered under the project so that the customer pays for the capital improvement with the money that comes out of the difference between pre-installation and post-installation energy use and other costs. For this reason, ESCOs have led the effort to verify, rather than estimate energy savings.

One of the most accurate means of measurement is the relatively new practice of metering, which is direct tracking of energy savings according to sanctioned engineering protocols.

Most performance-based ESCO projects include the maintenance of all or some portion of the new high-energy equipment over the life of the contract. The cost of this ongoing maintenance is folded into the overall cost of the project. Therefore, during the life of the contract, the customer receives the benefit of reduced maintenance costs, in addition to reduced energy costs. As an additional service in most contracts, the ESCO provides any specialized training needed so that the customer's maintenance staff can take over at the end of the contract period.