



Good for the Earth Good for Your Bottom Line

by Joseph R. Durham and Rene L. Rimelspach

Just days before his inauguration, President Barack Obama visited Cardinal Fastener & Specialty Co. in Bedford Heights, Ohio, to highlight his hopes for a new “green” economy. “The story of this company -- which began building wind turbine parts just two years ago and is now poised to make half its earnings that way -- is that a renewable-energy economy isn't some pie-in-the-sky, far-off future,” said the President. But how can this help your personal finances, or the bottom line of your company?

There are a variety of grants and tax credits available to both individuals and companies to encourage the use of alternative energy, energy efficient appliances and equipment, and energy usage conservation. As part of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (commonly known as the first “Bailout Bill”), the U.S. Congress extended Energy Efficiency Tax Incentives which were scheduled to expire at the end of 2008. The bill included extensions of a variety of renewable energy tax incentives, including, but not limited to:

- an extension of the commercial buildings energy efficiency tax deduction to the end of 2013;

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- an extension of the tax credit for efficient furnaces, boilers, air conditioners, water heaters and insulation and window upgrades to existing homes (covering improvements installed in 2009);
- a one-year extension of the new energy-efficient home tax credit, to the end of 2009;
- manufacturer tax credits for sales of high-efficiency refrigerators, clothes washers, dishwashers and de-humidifiers (2008-2010);
- a new tax credit for plug-in hybrid vehicles purchased starting in 2008 and extending until the number of qualifying vehicles reaches 250,000;
- accelerated depreciation for smart meters and smart grid systems;
- extension of an existing bonding program for green buildings and sustainable design, and establishment of a new energy conservation bond program that would help local and state governments to fund energy conservation efforts.

The incentives are not limited to the federal government. The Ohio Department of Development's Ohio Energy Office administers a variety of programs through the Advanced Energy Fund. There are currently funds available to:

- support implementation of wind energy technologies for residential homeowners;
- provide funding for residential renewable solar photovoltaic systems;
- implement solar electric, wind electric and solar thermal system renewable energy projects for commercial, industrial, institutional and governmental entities in Ohio.

As our society continues to adopt and incorporate emerging technologies, individuals, small businesses and government entities will take advantage of whatever incentives are available. To reduce the cost of going green, Eastman & Smith has worked on the development and start up of alternative energy projects that convert landfill gas to energy, proposals for compressed natural gas use in truck fleets and solar panel installations. For information on grants and tax incentives, or on how Eastman & Smith can assist you in these endeavors, please contact us.

Mr. Durham and Ms. Rimelspach can be reached at our Columbus office (614-280-1770). Their biographies appear on the following page.

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Background Check

featuring

Joseph R. Durham and Rene L. Rimelspach



Mr. Durham, a Columbus native, is a member the Firm practicing in the areas of environmental litigation, land use, zoning and nuisance enforcement. He has 17 years of experience as an attorney working as a litigator, an assistant prosecuting attorney (he was the first Franklin County environmental prosecutor) and a special assistant U.S. attorney prior to joining Eastman & Smith. Mr. Durham has experience litigating cases involving solid waste and CD&D landfills, as well as negotiating contracts for waste hauling and recycling. His family has ties to the waste industry dating back more than 50 years. Grandfather Rodney Durham founded Trash Collection Company in Columbus. Mr. Durham worked at TCC growing up and his parents, Rick and Linda Durham, operated the hauling company until 1991.

Married to Leslie Wiley, a self employed artist who attended Bowling Green State University, they have two daughters, Madison (13) and Jenna Rae (10). The girls are black belts, competitive swimmers, play softball and basketball. Mom and Dad are active volunteers, coaching the Columbus Public Schools Special Olympics golf and volleyball programs.

Mr. Durham is a board member for the Clintonville Academy Elementary and Middle School and Keep Ohio Beautiful, Inc. Also, he plays for the Columbus Dodgers in the Columbus Men's Senior Baseball League.

A graduate of Lewis and Clark's Northwestern School of Law in Portland, Oregon, Mr. Durham received a J.D. and certificate in Natural Resources and Environmental Law. He earned a B.A. from the College of Wooster.

You may reach Mr. Durham at our Columbus office at 100 E. Broad Street or by calling 614-280-1770.

Ms. Rimelspach is a native Toledoan who now makes her home in the Buckeye State's capital (having made her way down U.S. 23 to attend Ohio State for law school, and having yet to find her way back). When not cheering on the Buckeyes, Ms. Rimelspach is cheering on the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, her other alma mater.

An associate of Eastman & Smith, Ms. Rimelspach is part of the Firm's Environmental and Public Law Sections. Her practice includes representing clients in the areas of solid waste, nuisance laws and other environmental issues. Ms. Rimelspach also offers support and advice on public records, open meetings, public contracting and other issues unique to the Firm's public sector clientele. Prior to Eastman & Smith, Ms. Rimelspach worked for the Ohio Attorney General and Ohio Treasurer of State.

Ms. Rimelspach is involved in the community as well. She is a member of the Ohio State Bar Foundation's current Fellows Class, as well as active in the Ohio Women's Bar Association and in Green Energy Ohio. In her spare time, Ms. Rimelspach enjoys international travel, having most recently been to Spain, and currently in the process of planning a trip to Costa Rica.



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