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## In the News

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#### Construction Program Expands With Stimulus Funding Government Weatherization Program Adding 500 New Jobs Through Contractors

November 27, 2009  
By: Reporter Dorothy Tucker

Do you know how to use a hammer? Can you steady a ladder? Are you willing to learn a new trade? If so, you're the perfect candidate for one of 500 new jobs for a government backed program that's expanding with the use of stimulus money.

CBS 2's Dorothy Tucker reports that the non-profit Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County is looking to hire.

Michael Helwig family owns DNR construction. Many of his clients are referred to him by the Community and Economic Development Association, better known as CEDA.

The agency recently received \$40 million in stimulus money to weatherize 9,000 homes in Cook County. That means its contractors, like DNR, will get more business, which translates into a need for more workers.

"We have 75 employees now. We'd be looking to double the size of our company," Helwig said. "Our biggest thing in an employee is attitude; a good positive attitude, a willingness to learn."

They want people like Ed Moreno. He came to DNR with no background in construction.

Now he schedules appointments with clients and helps install windows, installation and perform other weatherization services.

"We go through classes. We have a three day crash course we go through to understand more about weatherization," Moreno said.

DNR is one of 50 contractors working with CEDA.

CEDA managers said all of them will need to hire more people, for a total of about 500 new jobs.

"They're good starting jobs. The wages are between \$14 and \$18 an hour," CEDA Director John Hamilton said. "I believe they'll last a long time, and they're skills that will transfer over to the private sector."

CEDA has a list of the contractors who are looking for workers. They'll share it with anyone who's interested.

CEDA also reminded homeowners in Cook County to apply for its weatherization program. It's free for those who qualify.