The City of Cozad, Dawson Area Development (DAD) and Cozad Development Corporation (CDC) have begun the process to fill the void in the manufacturing sector of our community as a result of the recent Tenneco closure announcement. Efforts to attract new industries are in full force. Collaboration between local agencies, Nebraska Public Power District and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development is vital.

Recent recruitment efforts include the completion of community marketing materials, development of a dedicated labor opportunity website, trade show attendance and the completion of a target industries study, just to name a few. We will continue to move forward and make contact with businesses desirous of locating in Cozad. Promotional materials to market the Tenneco facility are being developed and will be distributed to all of our target businesses. Efforts to market the available land we have for development as well as the former Tabora Farms Bakery building are also underway. The inclusion of this information on websites and informational flyers as well as in packets being delivered to prospects will ensure broad distribution.

Providing assistance and tools to the Tenneco employees is paramount. “Money Matters” was recently held at Chipper Hall and a job fair is being planned for the first quarter of 2010. Workforce Development, along with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, has pledged their resources to assist us in job transition, training and recruitment. Workforce Development was in Cozad at Chipper Hall on Nov. 18 and 19 to allow Tenneco employees to meet with representatives and discuss the available resources. Workforce Development is also available at Tenneco for individual meetings. Educating existing employers about posting job opportunities on websites such as dawsoncountycareers.com and nebraskaworkforce.com is important in creating centralized tools for job seekers.

If you have asked yourself, “what can I do,” the answer is to remain positive. We need to work together, support our local businesses and we will weather this storm. The City of Cozad, DAD and CDC will continue to work diligently on this project because success will not happen overnight. Your continued support is appreciated. If you have questions or concerns, please email them to geiser.cdc@cozadtel.net or call 308-784-3930.