



Eco Wise



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Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007- Raising the Bar on Energy Efficiency

On December 19, 2007 the most recent federal energy act, the *Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007*, was signed into law. The act contains provisions that will impact affordable housing. While many key provisions apply to transportation, renewable energy technologies and appliance manufacturers, the Act includes significant points of interest to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs).



Raising the Bar

Section 481 of the new law requires that certain HUD projects, including HOPE VI projects, meet or exceed existing energy conservation codes. Small residential developments must use the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Multifamily high rises are required to meet or exceed the energy efficiency standards of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 90.1-2004.

Already adopted by 15 states for residential projects, and 20 states for commercial buildings, the 2006 IECC calls for higher insulation levels than required by previous codes, windows that approach ENERGY STAR® criteria, higher efficiency heating and air conditioning systems, and more efficient lighting.

Furthermore, as more stringent versions of the IECC or ASHRAE Standard are introduced, new HOPE VI projects will be required to meet the updated standards unless HUD determines that updated versions are inappropriate (either economically unfeasible or not substantially improving energy efficiency). Stay up to date with current IECC revisions by visiting the International Code Council's Daily News. Preview revisions of ASHRAE Standard 90.1.

Training

As covered previously in EcoWise, the number of PHAs involved in Energy Performance Contracts (EPCs) is on the rise. EPCs have a good track record of providing substantial energy and water savings; freeing capital for investment in other property improvements. However, with all the other responsibilities of managing properties, not all PHAs have the time and resources available to negotiate a suitable EPC.

This Issue

- Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007- Raising the Bar on Energy Efficiency, and Providing the Resources to Get There
- Events and Training
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We want to hear from you! We are accepting nominations for projects to be highlighted in the EcoWise success stories. [Click here](#) to send us yours

Events and Training

The 2008 International Builder's Show
February 13-16
Orlando, FL

NESEA's Building Energy Trade Show
March 11-13, 2008
Boston, MA

HUD Energy Task Force
Regional Energy Coordinators

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007-Continued

Grants

Sections 541-548 of the Act direct the Department of Energy (DOE) to establish an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program to help reduce energy use and emissions at the local and regional levels. DOE will distribute some of the grants directly to State and local governments, as well as Native American Tribes. Other grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to local governments (including Native American Tribes) and organizations such as PHAs.

The new Energy Act raises energy conservation standards and provides grants for energy efficiency improvements and reductions in fossil fuel use.



In selecting the governments and groups that receive competitive grants, priority will be given to those states with populations of less than 2,000,000 or those that plan to carry out projects that would result in significant energy efficiency improvements or reductions in fossil fuel use.

This means PHAs with a legitimate strategy for reducing fossil fuel consumption, either by incorporating renewable energy or by improving energy efficiency, are eligible for significant funding. Subgrants to nongovernmental organizations, such as PHAs, for energy efficiency and conservation improvements will be limited to \$250,000 or 20 percent of the total project, (whichever is greater), plus up to \$75,000 or 10 percent (whichever is greater) for administrative costs. The total amount authorized for competitive grants is \$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012. Although these funds have been authorized, grants may not be available until appropriated by Congress; approximately late in 2008.

Tips for Maintenance



Green cleaning guidelines are part of a comprehensive green maintenance plan.

Regional Spotlight

Boulder, CO- Boulder Housing Partners (BHP) begins huge solar project. BHP, the housing authority serving the City of Boulder, partnered with a consulting firm and a solar energy company to install thirty 1.75 kilowatt solar electric systems on a 30-unit affordable housing site. The planned project completion date is late February, 2008.

Resources

[2007 Building Energy Databook](#) Compiled by the DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, this book provides an accurate and comprehensive set of buildings-related data.

[Building America's Best Practices: Improving New Home Efficiency, Comfort, and Durability in the Hot and Humid Climate](#)

Building America's system design recommendations and process improvements can help all builders interested in re-engineering their home designs to achieve high performance. This best practices handbook helps builders develop durable, comfortable residences that achieve 30% energy savings in space conditioning and water heating in hot and humid climates.

Maintenance Corner:

"Green" Property Maintenance

Green principles can be applied to maintenance, both interior and exterior, of all buildings. This means, among other things, using less toxic materials for cleaning, pest management and landscaping, and upgrading to less polluting, more efficient and ergonomic models when replacing maintenance equipment. You may wish to develop a standard maintenance plan incorporating green principles as a reference guide for staff. Include:

- Green cleaning product resources
- Resources for [Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\)](#) strategies suited to your region, including non- or less-toxic pesticides and herbicides, beneficial organism providers, and plant selection guidelines and species lists.
- Guidelines for equipment selection and purchasing to include efficiency standards and ergonomic considerations.
- Maintenance schedules for checking/changing filters
- Waste management strategies including recycling protocol for fluorescent lights and proper disposal of waste designated as Household Hazardous Waste

[Pennsylvania's Green Building Maintenance Manual](#) is the first of its kind in the nation. Use it as a reference as you develop your own green maintenance reference materials.

Email us with your Maintenance Corner questions at pheccinfo@nelrod.com

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This monthly e-mail update is brought to you by HUD's Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse (PHECC) featuring news and resources to help agencies manage energy and water costs.