



Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse News

September 2005

This monthly e-mail update is brought to you by HUD's Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse (PHECC). It features news and resources to help public housing authorities manage energy and water costs. To see past issues of this newsletter, and to access more information and tools for public housing authorities, visit the Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse Website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/>.

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Websites Worth a Click

Energy Bill Calls for Energy Conservation and Efficiency in Public Housing

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is the first comprehensive energy bill passed since 1992. The new Act calls for the Secretary of HUD to develop a strategy to reduce utility expenses through energy conservation and efficiency measures for public and assisted housing. The strategy shall include the development of energy reduction goals and incentives for public housing agencies. The Secretary also will promote energy conservation in tribally designated public housing through the use of energy-efficient technologies and innovations. Read the Act at http://energy.senate.gov/public/_files/ConferenceReport0.pdf [note: this is a large PDF file]. Information about PIH begins on page 155.

Did You Know?
Nationwide, PHA-paid utility bills total around \$1.3 billion annually, or about 25 percent of the costs to operate public housing.

The Act also:

- Allows for the extension of Energy Performance Contract payback to 20 years (p.157).
- Contains new code requirements for rehab and construction with HOPE VI funds (p.159).
- Includes instruction on ENERGY STAR appliance purchases for PHAs (p.158).

PHAs should note that the recent HUD notice regarding ENERGY STAR already encourages ENERGY STAR as the standard for public housing agencies. See HUD notice PIH 2005-25 (HA) at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/index.cfm>

A working group will convene in September in Washington, DC to discuss the Act's implication for PIH. 24 CFR 965 will then be revised to implement the Energy Bill.

\$4.5 Million in Grants Available to Fund Green Building and Rehab

Green Communities™ is a five-year, \$555 million initiative to build more than 8,500 environmentally healthy homes for low-income families. The initiative offers grants to help cover the costs of green components in affordable housing developments -- improvements that increase the profitability, productivity or usefulness of a property while preserving the quality of the environment. Public housing authorities and tribally designated housing entities are eligible for assistance through this program.

Financing can include below-market-rate acquisition and predevelopment loans and competitively priced tax credit equity. To learn more and download an application, visit <http://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/about-essentials-grants.asp>.

USGBC Launches LEED Green Building Rating System for Homes

Pilot Demonstration

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has launched a one-year pilot demonstration of its newest green building rating system, LEED for Homes. The Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) for Homes Rating System is a voluntary program that will recognize and reward the top 25% of green homebuilders based on construction techniques. New homes built to the LEED standards will be designed and constructed to use less energy, less water, and fewer materials. LEED-certified homes will feature improved indoor air quality through better ventilation and filtration systems design, and improved controls of pollutant sources.

USGBC has selected 12 local and regional organizations to be LEED for Homes Providers, who will give technical, marketing and verification support to builders during the pilot phase. All Providers must seek out affordable housing groups for the pilot. Public housing projects may qualify to participate. To contact a Provider, visit the USGBC press release at http://www.usgbc.org/News/pressreleases_details.asp?ID=1748&CMSPageID=164.

To learn more, visit the LEED for Home's Web page at <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=147>.

New Information on PHECC Helps Simplify Energy Performance Contracting

A PowerPoint presentation and updated procedures on Energy Performance Contracting (EPC) are now available on the PHECC Website. The presentation and procedures were presented at a two-day training on Energy Performance Contracting, attended by staff from HUD Headquarters and nine HUD Field Offices on June 23-24 in Washington, DC. The Website also has links to information created by the Buffalo Field Office based on the staff's experiences with EPC. View this information at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/eperformance.cfm>.

EVENTS

Affordable Housing Exhibition

September 7 - October 16

Hartford, Connecticut

A traveling exhibition, "Affordable Housing: Designing an American Asset," demonstrates approaches to designing and building affordable housing. The homes on display are energy efficient, durable, economical to maintain, and aesthetically appealing.

HUD helped finance the exhibition, which will be at the Lyceum Partnership for Strong Communities in Hartford, Connecticut, September 7-October 16; the Museum of Design in Atlanta, Georgia, January 21-March 19, 2006; and I Space in Chicago, Illinois, August 4-20, 2006. Learn more at http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org/news/ah_traveling_expo.shtml.

SUCCESS STORIES

Report Documents Development of High-Performance Hope VI Project in Louisville, Kentucky

"High Profile at Low Cost: Introducing a Multi-Family Residential Market to High-Performance Building Design and Construction" discusses the development of an energy-efficient housing project in Louisville, Kentucky that has earned the ENERGY STAR.

The Louisville Metro Housing Authority broke ground last December on this Hope VI Project on the site of the Clarksdale public housing complex. Phase I of the project will replace a 65-year-old public housing development, which includes 713 residential and 15 non-residential units. It will be completed in 2008.

To read the report, visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/success/highperfbldgs.pdf>.

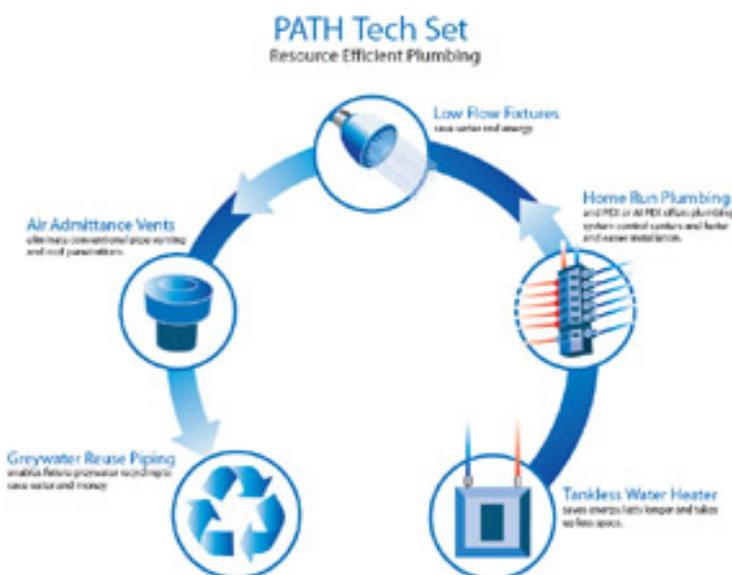
TECHNOLOGY TIP

Low-Flow Plumbing Fixtures Keep Money from Going Down the Drain

Saving water means saving money for housing authorities and residents. Here are a few easy, low-cost changes to consider.

According to the American Water Works Association, replacing a toilet installed before 1994 can save a typical household 7,900 to 21,700 gallons of water per year, cutting both water and wastewater bills. Low-flow toilets use a maximum of 1.6 gallons of water per flush compared with about 3.5 gallons of water used by a standard toilet.

Low-flow showerheads use about 2.5 gallons of water per minute compared to between four and five gallons per minute used by conventional heads. Low-flow faucet aerators can cut the water usage of faucets by as much as 40% from four gallons per minute to 2.5. Low-flow faucet aerators and showerheads are available at little additional cost.



In addition, plumbing fixtures that have a pressure of 60 psi or less (20 psi less than the national code) will reduce water use, as well as the risk of equipment failures and leaks.

Installation of low-flow plumbing fixtures is similar to that of conventional fixtures. The majority of these fixtures require no special connections or fittings. However, look carefully before you buy. All low-flow fixtures will reduce your water use, but they won't all deliver the same level of quality.

Some water providers offer rebates and incentives for replacing inefficient toilets. Contact your provider to see if there is a

program available.

Learn more about low-flow fixtures at <http://www.toolbase.org/techinv/techDetails.aspx?technologyID=190>. Learn more about water conservation at <http://www.awwa.org/Advocacy/learn/conserve/index.cfm> and <http://www.h2ouse.org/>.

To learn about cutting the cost of construction and maintenance while decreasing water use, see HUD's Partnership for Advancing Housing Technology (PATH) Tech Set, "Resource Efficient Plumbing," at <http://www.pathnet.org/sp.asp?id=14055>. The Tech Set features several methods for reducing water consumption beyond low-flow fixtures, including tankless water heaters, home run plumbing, air admittance vents, and greywater reuse piping.

ENERGY WATCH

Weatherize Homes Now: Energy Prices Expected to Remain High This Winter

Due to Hurricane Katrina and the interruption in fuel production in the Gulf of Mexico, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that average heating fuel prices will be significantly higher this winter than last. EIA anticipates regional expenditure increases of:

- 17-18 percent for electricity in the South
- 29-33 percent for heating oil in the Northeast
- 39-43 percent for propane in the Midwest
- 69-77 percent for natural gas in the Midwest

EIA reports high increases in natural gas costs in the East North Central region (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin) due to more severe winter weather conditions.

To keep costs low, the Department of Energy suggests weatherizing homes now, before the cold weather begins. The following actions can help lower home heating costs this winter:

- Seal cracks leading to the outside.
- Install storm doors and windows.
- Make sure that all doors and windows fit tightly.

For more information on weatherizing, visit <http://www.energysavers.gov> and PHECC's Cost Reduction Toolbox, <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/toolbox.cfm>. See EIA's energy price projections at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/steo/pub/contents.html>.

WEBSITES WORTH A CLICK

Affordable Housing Design Advisor

The Affordable Housing Design Advisor, <http://www.designadvisor.org/>, brings together experience and ideas from successful affordable housing projects all over the country. The

site includes green design guidelines and case studies of affordable housing projects.

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