



Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse News

June 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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Participate in HUD's Benchmarking Study: Find Out Where You Stand

The Office of Public and Indian Housing will be asking PHAs in Regions II and III for basic building and utility usage information for input into PIH's pilot benchmarking study. How does the energy efficiency of your buildings compare to other similar buildings? PHAs that participate in this voluntary program will be the first to find out how their utility bills stack up against bills for other public housing agencies. Watch for this survey to be distributed soon.

Reminder: Energy Audits Required Every Five Years

PHAs must complete an energy audit for each PHA-owned project every five years. For more information on this requirement, see 24 CFR 965.302 at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/policies.cfm>. Visit the "Features" section of the PHECC Website, <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/>, for tips on conducting an energy audit. Contact your utility provider to see if it offers a free audit. Some of these offerings are listed at http://www.cee1.org/multi/2002MF_Prog_Sum.pdf.

Special Native American Edition of PHECC Coming in August

The August edition of the PHECC newsletter will feature Native American public housing. This includes housing in American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities. Submit your news or success stories to pheccinfo@drintl.com.

HUD Spreads the Word on its Energy Plan

HUD shared details on its Energy Action Plan, a blueprint for achieving exemplary energy efficiency, with grantees and partners during a May 10 workshop in Washington, DC. View a video of the entire workshop at <http://srb-hud.irides.com:8080/ramgen/srbhud/real/hud/2005/0510/wc-05750-en-cc-ss.rm?usehostname>.

EVENTS

Affordable Housing Exhibition

June 25-August 28, 2005

Seattle, Washington

A new traveling exhibit, "Affordable Housing: Designing an American Asset," demonstrates approaches to designing and building affordable housing in America. The homes on display are energy efficient, durable, economical to maintain, and aesthetically appealing. Models, photographs, drawings, and a video showcase homes in 18 urban and rural neighborhoods across the United States.

HUD helped finance the exhibition, which will be at the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle, June 25-August 28; 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

SUCCESS STORIES

Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency Goes Green

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) is enjoying a cool summer in its new resource-efficient headquarters in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The building is expected to earn a Silver Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council-the second highest level in the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system.

The building's light beige exterior and white roof help reduce the "heat island effect" common to dense urban areas. Because the building reflects heat and is well insulated, it also has a lower air-conditioning load, which cuts energy consumption-and energy bills.

To save water, the building includes a 10,000-gallon rainwater storage tank for toilet flushing and low-flow plumbing fixtures. Other resource-efficient features include 25% recycled materials such as steel, concrete, and carpets, and use of renewable resources such as bamboo floors. Eighty percent of the waste generated during construction was recycled.

For more information, contact Rick Nichols at 717-780-3854 or rnichols@phfa.org.

TECHNOLOGY TIP

Water Heaters: How to Save Money and Energy

When replacing a domestic hot water system (DHW), choose an energy-efficient model to save money and energy. The Energy Factor (EF) of the water heater identifies the efficiency of the unit. The Federal Energy Guide label, located on all new units, lists an EF and annual operating cost.

For gas water heaters, the minimum EF should be .55 and above; for electric, .85 and above; and for oil, .52 and above. NAHB's Model Green Home Building Guidelines, http://www.nahb.org/publication_details.aspx?publicationID=1994, recommend the following minimum Energy Factors:

Gas	
Size (gallons)	Energy Factor
30	.64
50	.60
Electric	
30	.95
50	.92
Oil	
30	.59
50	.55

For maximum savings, be sure the system is properly sized. You may wish to consult a professional

since correct sizing can be complex.

Lowering the heater's thermostat to 120° will generally provide sufficient hot water for common household use. In some cases a higher temperature may be necessary to accommodate tenants' water heating needs, however, the thermostat should never be set higher than 140°.

Many older multifamily buildings have tankless coils in the heating system boiler to produce domestic hot water year-round. Although this is helpful in the winter, it is only 10-45% efficient in the summer because the boiler is oversized when it is in the DHW-only mode. If you are replacing your boiler, do a cost-benefit analysis to decide if you should purchase a separate DHW and furnace.

The Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) Website has a calculator to compare energy costs based on size, water usage, and quantity to be purchased. This tool provides a recommended Energy Factor. Find the calculator at

http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/technologies/eep_waterheaters_calc.cfm.

Global Green USA has comprehensive guidance on water heater replacement for public housing available at http://www.globalgreen.org/pha-energytoolbox/tech_dhw.htm.

If you are not planning to replace your DHW system, investigate energy conservation opportunities such as improved operations and maintenance programs, low-flow devices, insulation of tanks, and off-peak controls. All DHW piping should have a minimum of 1 inch of insulation.

ENERGY STAR® IN FOCUS

Considering Window Replacement? See These Savings Estimates

A new ENERGY STAR report created for partners provides updated cost and energy savings data for window replacements. PHAs may find this information useful when considering window replacement as part of a comprehensive energy conservation plan or for mitigation of lead-based paint. The report contains annual national, regional, and local savings estimates for choosing ENERGY STAR when replacing single-pane or double-pane clear-glass windows in existing construction or as an alternative to double-pane, clear-glass windows in new construction. View the report at

http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/manuf_res/windows/ES_Windows_Cost_Energy_Savings.pdf.



ENERGY WATCH

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), electricity prices are expected to increase because demand is expected to increase by 2.6% in 2005 and by an additional 2.4% in 2006, largely due to continuing economic growth. Cooling and heating demand is also likely to be higher in the third and fourth quarters of 2005 than in the mild third and fourth quarters of 2004.

Natural gas prices declined almost everywhere in the U.S. at the end of May except in the Southwest, due partly to mild weather.

Crude oil prices are forecast to remain high by historical standards, largely because of high demand.

For more detailed energy price information, visit EIA's Website at <http://eia.doe.gov/>.

WEBSITES WORTH A CLICK

DOE Building Energy Software Tools Directory

This directory provides information on 293 building software tools for evaluating energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability in buildings. The tools include databases, spreadsheets, component and systems analyses, and whole-building energy performance simulation programs. Information on each tool includes expertise required to use the tool, required computer platforms, strengths and weaknesses, technical contacts, and availability. Visit the directory at http://www.eere.energy.gov/buildings/tools_directory/.

Greener Choices

Consumers Union, publisher of Consumer Reports, has launched <http://www.greenerchoices.org>. The site covers a wide range of issues, including energy, climate change, waste, and toxic substances. The site also provides product information; energy calculators; rebate information; and links to information about local energy, recycling, and sewage treatment services.

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