



Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse News March-April 2004

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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Events:

- "Catching the Dream" Expanding Options for Affordable Housing: Local Issues, Local Solutions. Various dates and locations. *Find out about the latest strategies to expand affordable housing for tribes!*
- Energy Performance Contracting for PHAs. June 14-18. *Features a role-playing and a case study approach to provide you with tools to implement an Energy Performance Contract in your own PHA!*
- Mold Assessment Workshop for Tribes, May 18-19 and July 20-21. *Got mold? Get help in this HUD workshop that will assist tribes and other key tribal staff regarding mold and mildew in homes!*
- 12th Annual Conference for Building Commissioning. May 18-20. *Learn about recent trends and developments in commissioning and operating and maintaining buildings that could save energy and money!*

Success Stories:

- Jackson Street Village, St. Paul, Minnesota—*A new affordable housing development where energy efficiency features are saving residents \$300 each year*
- Housing Authority of the City of Riverside (California)—*A new energy-efficient utility allowance schedule takes energy-efficient buildings into account*
- Residential Energy Efficiency Program (REEP), Vermont—*A successful program helping public housing owners and managers reduce energy costs.*

Tip of the Month: Install Photo Controls for Exterior Lighting

Websites Worth a Click



NEWS



And the Survey Says...

Thanks to everyone who participated in last month's survey regarding PHECC News! We want to be sure the information we're providing each month is useful in helping you reduce water and energy costs in your housing authorities, and your feedback helps us stay on track. Your responses showed generally positive results. The five newsletter features (News, Events, Success Stories, Tip of the Month, Websites Worth a Click) earned an average rating of 3.1 or better, on a scale of 1 to 5. The importance of energy issues ranked 3.1 on average, indicating that energy is a concern for most of you. As well, several of you indicated topics you'd like to see covered, and we heard you! We're addressing those topics, starting with this issue! If you'd like to suggest any other topics or ways we can improve, send an e-mail to cathys@phaenergy.org.

New Regional Centers Developed to Increase CHP Applications

In many cases, combined heat and power (CHP) systems make economic sense for multifamily housing properties. CHP systems use waste heat from power generation equipment to heat and cool, resulting in energy savings, reduced utility costs, and other benefits. And, for years, Federal agencies including HUD, DOE, and EPA, have been working to encourage greater use of CHP systems. Back in 1998, DOE and EPA established a challenge to double CHP applications in the U.S. from 46 gigawatts to 92 gigawatts by 2010. Just last fall, DOE and HUD joined forces in an Interagency Agreement with a similar goal. And now, with more than \$1.5 million in DOE funding, six regional application centers (RACs) have been established to provide education, outreach, and support for CHP projects. The centers are located in the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Midwest, Northwest, Intermountain, and Pacific.

The RACs will promote CHP technology and practices, serve as a central repository and clearinghouse of CHP information, and identify and help implement regional CHP projects. While specifics are still being worked out, the RACs are currently conducting road mapping workshops for the initiative. For more information, see <http://bchp.org/policy.html>. For more information on CHP technology, see DOE's website at <http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/technologies/derchp.cfm>.

Norwalk, Connecticut, Announces Affordable Housing Design Competition



In an effort to create more affordable housing, the Norwalk Housing Authority is sponsoring a new housing design competition that focuses on both affordability and sustainability. The competition focuses on townhouses or apartments suited for first-time homebuyers, entry- and mid-level professionals, and fixed income seniors. According to Steven Winter Associates, the project's coordinator, all architects registered in the U.S. are eligible to enter. "We encourage designers to incorporate as many sustainable features in their schemes as possible," says SWA's Alex Grinnell, "but sustainable strategies need to be substantiated as appropriate and cost-effective." Deadline for submissions is August 13, 2004. For more information, see <http://www.swinter.com/norwalkhousingdesigncompetition.html>.

New Air Conditioner Standards Could Save Consumers Some \$5 Billion



Air conditioning is a big expense for most consumers, but new standards will reduce energy consumption of air conditioners by nearly one-fourth. This could be especially valuable in public housing, where tight budgets and utility costs are high concerns. The SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) will increase from its current 10 to 13 in January 2006.

According to the American Council for an Energy-Efficiency Economy (ACEEE) the new standard will reduce energy consumption of new air conditioners by 23 percent. ACEEE further estimates the standard will reduce peak demand for electricity by 41,500 megawatts by 2020, saving consumers some \$5 billion from 2006-2030. See ACEEE's press release at <http://aceee.org/press/0403seer.htm> to learn more. For additional information on conserving air-conditioning energy, see:

- ENERGY STAR's Room Air Conditioning http://energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=roomac.pr_room_ac
- Southface Energy Institute fact sheets <http://www.southface.org/home/sfpubs/miscpubs.html>
- PATH Technology Inventory for Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning at <http://www.toolbase.org/secondaryT.asp?TrackID=&CategoryID=1287&Type=>

Price Watch

DOE Predicts Natural Gas Costs Will Remain High Through Spring

Consumers across the country have been impacted by rising energy costs, and there seems to be little relief in sight. According to DOE's Energy Information Administration (EIA), energy costs have increased 12 percent for

natural-gas heated homes over the past month. Similarly, electricity costs increased by 2 percent and propane costs increased by 7 percent. Oil-heated homes saw a 2-percent decrease in costs. EIA also predicts that natural gas wellhead prices will remain relatively high through late spring. One bit of good news: Average U.S. electricity prices are expected to decline by 8 percent, from 7.2 cents per kilowatt-hour in 2002 to 6.6 cents in 2008, and to remain relatively stable until 2011. For more information, see EIA's **Energy Forecasts** page at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/forecasting.html>.



EVENTS

"Catching the Dream"

Expanding Options for Affordable Housing: Local Issues, Local Solutions

Various locations and dates

Is your Tribal program looking for solutions to affordable housing? Then don't miss this exciting, interactive, two-day regional summit presented by HUD's Development Office of Native American Programs! Interact with stakeholders to identify issues and barriers, and to create strategies and actions to expand options for affordable housing opportunities for your community. The event is scheduled in several locations over the coming months. Because the summits are regional in nature, HUD recommends registering for the summit in your region. Find out more at <https://conference.aspensys.com/confONAP/index.html>

Energy Performance Contracting for PHAs

June 14-18, 2004

Chicago, Illinois

Looking for ways to reduce your utility costs without investing a bundle in costs upfront? This workshop could be just the ticket! Learn how to use Energy Performance Contracting to get energy conservation measures installed and then use the resulting energy savings for pay for the capital improvements, and even for other needs within your housing authority. Find out more at <http://www.hud.gov/local/il/working/EPCagenda04.pdf>!

Mold Assessment Workshop

May 18-19, 2004, in Verona, New York

July 20-21, 2004, in Denver, Colorado

Mold assessment and moisture control are big issues in Indian Country. But with this two-day training session from HUD's Office of Native American Programs, solutions are closer than ever! Learn more about mold in homes, how to identify a moisture problem, and steps to correct current problems and prevent future problems. Learn more about the event at http://www.codetalk.gov/2004_Training_Information_Mold_Assessment.html.

12th Annual Conference for Building Commissioning

May 18-20, 2004

Atlanta, Georgia

Building commissioning can improve the quality, efficiency, and performance of buildings. Wondering how? Find out at this 12th annual event! Get more details at <http://www.peci.org/ncbc/2004/index.html>.



SUCCESS STORIES

Boston Housing Authority

Boston, Massachusetts

At Boston Housing Authority's Maverick Gardens, low-income residents are enjoying affordability through a number of measures, including a high level of energy efficiency. The project emphasizes green space and sustainability in construction. Its design incorporates energy-efficient building materials, lighting, and appliances. Photovoltaic panels and a solar hot water-heating system round out the energy features. Funding for the project came from HUD's Hope IV funds and from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. Read more about this project at <http://www.mass.gov/doer/rb-ma/rbnews-2.pdf>.

Housing Authority of the City of Riverside

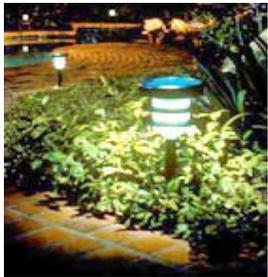
Riverside, California

Property owners and tenants alike are benefiting from an energy-efficient utility allowance schedule developed by the Housing Authority of the City of Riverside, California. The new allowance schedule encourages multifamily owners to increase the energy efficiency of their units. By doing so, owners can increase the value and marketability of their properties while reducing utility bills. And, taking lower subsidies into account, the potential cost savings to a housing authority can be substantial. There are advantages to residents, as well, including lower energy costs and increased comfort. Read more about the utility allowance schedule at <http://www.seiinc.org/case%20studies/HACREEUtilityAllowance.pdf>.

Residential Energy Efficiency Program (REEP)

Vermont

REEP is successfully working with Vermont property developers, owners, and managers to reduce energy costs and achieve long-term affordability in low-income housing. Established in 1997, the program is a partnership between local utilities and the low-income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) that provides financial incentives to building owners for the installation of cost-effective energy measures. REEP also leverages incentives from utilities, WAP, and other sources. In only its first two years, the program installed an impressive \$1,275,000 worth of energy improvements in 893 low-income multifamily units in Vermont, resulting in an average annual savings per customer of \$225,000. Learn more about this project at [http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/UniqueKeyLookup/RAMR5CYQWT/\\$File/VT_REEP.pdf](http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/UniqueKeyLookup/RAMR5CYQWT/$File/VT_REEP.pdf).



TIP OF THE MONTH

Install Photo Controls for Exterior Lighting

In many developments, outdoor lighting is switched on either manually when maintenance staff leave for the day, or by a clock timer. In either case, lights may be on for several hours before they are needed, particularly in the summertime, resulting in considerable energy waste. Photo controls are designed to eliminate these unnecessary hours of operation and the resulting energy waste by monitoring natural light levels and switching on lights only when natural light levels fall below a predetermined level.

Photo controls can be installed on individual lamps or grouped together to control multiple lamps. To maximize energy savings potential, consider using these controls in conjunction with the installation of high-pressure sodium or metal halide lighting, which are twice as efficient as mercury vapor lighting, four times more efficient than halogen, and eight times more efficient than incandescent lighting.

For more information on photo controls for lighting, see:

- "Lighting Controls" http://homeenergysaver.lbl.gov/hes/makingithappen/no_regrets/lightingcontrols.html
- "Lighting Controls Save Energy" http://www.energyusernews.com/CDA/Article_Information/Fundamentals_Item/0,2637,119815,00.html



WEBSITES WORTH A CLICK

Alliance to Save Energy

Looking for information to help your residents conserve energy? The Alliance to Save Energy's got it! Both housing authority staff and residents can benefit from the Alliance's website, which offers an array of useful information on topics such as windows, appliances, building codes, and more! Get the scoop at <http://ase.org/>!

Energy Crossroads

If you've ever done an online search for information on energy conservation, chances are that you identified many, many potential resources. But which resources are best? Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory has done a good deal of the work for you! LBL's Energy Crossroads organizes a wide array of links to online energy-efficiency resources, identifying some 700 useful websites! Check it out at <http://eetd.lbl.gov/EnergyCrossroads/EnergyCrossroads.html>!

TO UNSUBSCRIBE FROM THE PHECC Electronic Newsletter:

If you ever want to remove yourself from this mailing list, you can send mail to <Majordomo@lists.ncat.org> with the following command in the body of your email message:

unsubscribe phecc

The Public Housing Energy Conservation Clearinghouse is managed by the nonprofit National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) for HUD, Office of Public and Indian Housing.

Comments? Questions? Email the newsletter editor at cathys@phaenergy.org.
