



EcoWise

Your Environmental Resource



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The Newsletter Has Changed!

We're taking a new direction by integrating maintenance and utilities management in ways that enhance energy efficiency optimizing comfort and safety for residents of PHAs. Please tell us what you think by completing this quick [survey](#)!

Collaborative Performance: Energy Partnerships

In 2005, Congress passed the Energy Policy Act (EPAAct) to address growing concerns over energy in the United States. Partnerships for Home Energy Efficiency (PHEE) were formed in conjunction with the EPAAct as part of a coordinated Federal move toward managing the Nation's energy needs. By leveraging a vast network of resources throughout the public and private sectors, PHEE – made up of key players from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – seeks to reduce residential energy consumption and costs, 10% by 2015. Toward this end, PHEE developed four strategies aimed at reducing State vulnerabilities associated with rising energy costs; one of these strategies is to promote energy efficiency in affordable housing.



Central to creating energy efficient affordable housing, energy performance contracting (EPC) has moved to the forefront of PHEE and public housing policy. Over the past several years, Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) have aggressively pursued EPCs by investing nearly \$350 million. Consequently, PHAs have saved an estimated \$37 million in 2006 alone. Further, the number of PHAs using EPC has increased at a rate of 24% per year since 2000.

Realizing the long-lasting effects that energy efficiency has on individual households and the overall health of public housing, PHAs push to develop EPC, and they should continue to do so. PHEE's genesis and ambitious goals underscore the importance of energy efficient affordable housing on a national scale, making clear the value of EPC to the health of the national economy.

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Energy Watch

Official energy statistics from the Energy Information Administration

Events

[Building Energy 2007: Building for a Changing Climate](#)

March 13-15 - Boston, MA

[ENERGY STAR Awards Ceremony](#)

March 21 - Washington, DC

[National Green Building Conference](#)

March 25-27 - St. Louis, MO

Energy Star® Guides the Way

The increasingly bitter winter is a stark reminder of how costly energy can be for housing developments. While cutting costs may seem harder than racking them up, some tips from Energy Star prove that patching the hole in your wallet may be easier than you think. Residents who embrace Energy Star will help lower energy bills. Moreover, efforts toward energy conservation reduce the risks associated with global warming making your efforts doubly valuable!

- 1. Lighting** – Turn off the lights when you leave a room, and try installing energy efficient bulbs in the rooms you spend the most time in.
- 2. Furnaces** – If cold air comes out of the warm air vents after the furnace turns off, it may indicate an improperly sized furnace or incorrect thermostat settings; both can negatively impact fuel bills.
- 3. Thermostat** – Switching to a programmable thermostat with automated energy-saving temperature settings can result in big savings on bills. Ask your manager if this is a viable option for your development.
- 4. Electronics** – Consumer electronics often use energy even when they are turned off. Remember to unplug items like cell phone chargers and computers when they are not in use.
- 5. Shower** – Switching to a low-flow shower head can reduce both water and electricity consumption.
- 6. Air** – Maximize comfort and energy use by ensuring that air flow registers aren't blocked by furniture.
- 7. Windows** – Take advantage of the sun's energy in the winter by allowing warm sunlight in.
- 8. Rinsing** - Using less water while rinsing dishes can add up to big savings in energy bills.
- 9. Laundry** – 90% of the energy consumed by your washing machine is used to heat the water. Using cold water exclusively can save energy.
- 10. Dryers** - Dry only full loads, reduce the drying time for small loads, and keep the lint trap clean!

These tips form an important part of what you can do to conserve energy. Using the Energy Star label as your guiding light will ensure that you're maximizing your energy dollar and minimizing harmful effects on the environment in subtle, yet meaningful ways.

A Tip for Residents

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Comments? Questions? Email the newsletter editor at pheccinfo@nelrod.com or call 1-800-955-2232

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.



Resources

[ENERGY STAR @ Home](#)
Heat your home smartly

[Energy Efficiency at HUD](#)
2006 Report to Congress

[Partnerships for Affordable Housing](#)
Overview of DOE partnership programs to improve energy efficiency and affordability in homes

Maintenance Corner

Low flow toilets are installed in my development but I haven't seen a significant decrease in water use. Is it possible to increase my savings? How much can I expect to save?

A low flush toilet (1.6 gal/flush) uses half the amount of water required by the old standard fixture (3.5 gal/flush). Toilets account for 20-30% of household water usage resulting in reduced water usage of up to 10-15%. Data collected by the American Water Works Association shows that water savings may be less than optimal due to operation. To maximize water savings from a low flush toilet, check to make sure the toilets aren't running or leaking. Check the fill mechanisms to verify that the tank is not overfull. Insure that the water flow at the valve is set correctly. Older low flush model users may be limiting savings by using a double flush to remove waste. Improvements in toilet technology have put new products on the market that enhance performance without sacrificing water savings.

To check for leaks, put 10 drops of food coloring into the water tank. Wait 10 minutes and check the water in the bowl. If the water in the bowl has changed color, the tank is leaking. If your toilet is leaking, contact your maintenance staff.

Email us your Maintenance Corner questions!
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