

APARTMENT & CONDO ENERGY NEWS

The quarterly newsletter for multi-family residential building professionals



Change is in the Wind

By Carter Dedolph, Program Manager

The winds of change are upon us. What was once stable and predictable is now uncertain and chaotic. Foundations of our economy—new-home construction and home mortgages—have crashed. Yet despite the housing problems, occupancy rates at apartment complexes have hit record highs, and new construction of multi-family projects is still active despite a downturn in construction across sectors.

As the number of tenants has increased, so too has interest in energy efficiency. Whether you believe in climate change or not, energy efficiency makes as much sense for the environment as it does for your bottom line, and your customers' bottom lines. You can promote energy efficiency as a smart way for building owners and managers to maintain occupancy levels and keep energy costs down. And Focus on Energy is here to help you identify energy-saving opportunities in new and existing buildings alike.

Speaking of change...

It's with bittersweet feelings that I bid you and the wonderful Apartment & Condo Efficiency Services team goodbye. Effective in June, I have moved into the program manager position with Focus on Energy's Single Family Homes Program.

But not to worry, as I'm leaving you in good hands! Mike Plunkett, program manager for Focus on Energy's Residential Lighting Program, is transitioning into the program-manager role for Apartment and Condo Efficiency Services. Mike brings a strong background in managing existing multi-family buildings and developing new multi-family construction projects. All of us associated with the program are excited about Mike's arrival and eager to see what he'll achieve.

I'd like to thank all of the program participants, market providers and apartment associations for your participation and support of Apartment and Condo Efficiency Services. You've helped to bring this program out of hibernation and into a place of prominence within the Focus on Energy portfolio. Most of all, I'd like to thank my team here at Focus for all its hard work and dedication to ensuring this program's success.

Wishing you all the best in the future!

Carter Dedolph

Star Performers 2009

Recognizing Resourceful and Innovative Successes in Energy Efficiency

Two New Construction Projects

ONE at The North End, Milwaukee

Developer: Mandel Group Units: 83

This is a market-rate rental property on an industrial site situated along the Milwaukee River. The Mandel Group redeveloped an old tannery site with green building ideals. As the first in a two-phase project, the developers installed central gas domestic hot water instead of in-unit electric, and removed perimeter electric baseboard heating. They also installed ENERGY STAR[®] appliances, high efficiency furnace and air-conditioning units, occupancy sensors, and low light-power density in common areas (which provides sufficient light using systems designed to output less than the maximum allowable watts per square foot).

Park Central Apartments, Madison

Developer: Stone House Development Units: 76

This large infill urban-housing complex built on Madison's east side qualified for Madison Gas and Electric's affordable housing program. Many innovative and industry-leading technologies were used throughout the building to save energy, including: unheated garages, ENERGY STAR appliances, furnaces and in-unit energy efficient light fixtures, energy efficient elevators and low-light power density in the common areas, to name a few. The project participated in multiple Focus on Energy programs, including extensive solar hot water and solar electric installations.



Program Updates

New Construction, by Sharon Gould, Implementation Manager

Focus on Energy's New Construction Program continues to thrive in a challenging market. It appears we are serving a larger cross section of the market. Despite the economy, there are still many multi-family housing projects moving forward, from low-income housing to high-end condominium projects. Some projects have slowed down, and many condo projects have converted to rentals, but they seem to be leasing well. In particular, we are already consulting with more than half of the 37 Low Income Housing Tax Credit recipients approved in April by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA).

WHEDA's scoring system encourages a choice of three green building standards. Our program has provided input for a number of buildings completed to WHEDA standards.

For example:

1. Prairie Apartments in Milwaukee, our program's 2008 Star Performer, applied LEED for Homes certification.
2. Parmenter Circle in Middleton was the first recipient of a Green Communities multi-family award in Wisconsin and is featured in a case study (available at focusonenergy.com) as a result.
3. Park Central, profiled in Star Performers below, used the Green Built Home checklist.

Existing Buildings, by Brody Vance, Implementation Manager

If you've put off replacing your inefficient space heater or water heater, now is the time! You could save up to 25 percent in energy costs by replacing a heating or water-heating system that's more than 20 years old.

Energy efficient water-heating systems offer the benefit of year-round savings, especially if you install a high-efficiency, sealed-combustion, condensing model.

Contact Focus on Energy to schedule a free on-site visit from trained energy advisors who can assess your system's efficiency and estimate the savings you could achieve this winter. Along with a good contractor, our experts can help you choose an energy efficient, right-sized system that will save you money for years to come.

Save with proper maintenance

If a boiler or water-heater replacement isn't in the budget this year, you can still save energy and money by having your burners tuned and cleaned. In fact, proper maintenance of your boiler or water heater can result in a 5-percent increase in combustion efficiency and earn you financial incentives from Focus on Energy!

"Tune-and-cleans" should be performed at least every other year, and Focus incentives can pay up to 50 percent of your maintenance costs—to a maximum of \$100 per piece of equipment. Remember, if your equipment's efficiency remains less than 70 percent after a tune-and-clean, it's time to replace the system.

Proper preventative maintenance offers benefits beyond energy savings. It can also help you identify upcoming repair expenses—or even avoid them altogether if you take action early.

Program Savings Totals

Jan. 1–May 31, 2009 versus the same period in 2008.

	2009	2008
Kilowatt-hours	4,644,853	4,572,718
Therms	691,826	441,554

These savings are equal to: taking 1,337 cars off the road, avoiding the burning of 23 train cars worth of coal, or preventing the emissions of 16 million pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

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