

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development  
100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD  
**NCSHA 2010 Awards**  
**The Multifamily Rental Energy Efficiency Initiative**

**Category: Rental Housing**

**Sub-Category: Preservation and Rehabilitation**

**Entry Name: The Multifamily Rental Energy Efficiency Initiative**

*“The Green Grant will help owners find ways to reduce operating expenses and tenant utility burdens as part of Maryland’s effort to preserve affordable rental housing.”*

*Governor Martin O’Malley*

The Multifamily Rental Energy Efficiency Initiative combines two state imperatives: Maryland’s pressing need to preserve affordable and workforce rental housing and Maryland’s desire to reduce its energy consumption by 15 percent by 2015. The marriage of these two imperatives into one coherent, multipronged, multiagency program has garnered national attention and already is being emulated across the country.

The approach ensures that the state preserves affordable and workforce multifamily housing units within easy access to public transportation and in those areas where the need is greatest. It also ensures that units employ the latest green technology for energy efficiency.

#### **Multifamily Energy Efficiency and Housing Affordability Program (MEEHA)**

In a unique partnership with the Maryland Energy Administration and with the support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, DHCD is providing funding to perform energy audits and implement energy efficiency improvements as a means to preserving affordable rental housing across the state.

With approximately \$9.5 million made available through the Maryland Energy Administration, DHCD is making grants and loans for the purchase and installation of energy efficiency improvements, and/or renewable energy improvements in affordable multifamily rental housing developments. Such items include, but are not limited to, Energy Star qualified: HVAC systems, insulation, windows, draft stopping and duct sealing, appliances and fixtures, and renewable energy generation and water heating equipment. MEEHA grants have also funded energy audits/studies to determine the appropriate energy efficiencies for a building.

To date, 16 projects involving 1,686 units are under construction which have received MEEHA grant funding totaling \$3.3 million. Additionally, 13 projects (1,191 units) have received funding (\$55,000) to complete an energy audit using MEEHA funds, with each property having expressed an interest in following through and complete the improvements recommended in the audit reports.

DHCD is also reserving \$700,000 in MEEHA funding to complete two Deep Energy Retrofit projects. These projects will involve performing an intensive energy efficiency retrofit on a model building within a development that will reduce energy consumption by 50 percent or more over code. The building would then serve as a model to compare to the other buildings on site to see the difference in energy savings.

With funding through the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and in partnership with the Maryland Energy Administration, the Green Grant reimburses eligible applicants for costs associated with

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Energy Audits for affordable multifamily rental housing or for the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) accreditation and training. Green Grant funding totals \$275,000, and is open to properties and eligible individuals from the following eight MacArthur Partnership Counties: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Prince George's or Saint Mary's Counties.

Twenty-six affordable multifamily rental housing projects totaling 3,879 units have undertaken energy audits funded through the Green Grant at a cost of roughly \$135,000, with each property having expressed an interest in following through and completing the improvements recommended in the audit reports.

The Green Grant Program also has funded LEED training for three individuals, with roughly 10-15 more expressing interest. In addition, the Green Grant Program sponsored a full-day workshop in March 2010 which provided entry-level LEED training for 34 individuals. This training workshop was conducted by the U.S. Green Building Council at DHCD's offices in Crownsville. The training covered the basics of green-building and LEED as it relates to multifamily housing, and serves to prepare individuals for their Green Associate (entry-level) accreditation. DHCD has also reserved funding for 40-50 individuals to pursue accreditation, and will cover study materials and testing fees.