

November 4, 2010

Leon County Files Suit in Federal Court to Preserve Its PACE Program

To ensure the survival of its local energy efficiency program, Leon County, Fla., filed complaint in federal court on October 8, 2010, against the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation ("Freddie Mac") and the Federal National Mortgage Association ("Fannie Mae") in an effort to reverse recent federal regulatory actions taken by the FHFA.

Those actions have undermined the County's Leon Energy Assistance Program, also known as "LEAP," and others like it throughout the nation, which are intended to assist property owners by funding energy efficiency improvements on their homes and businesses through property assessments.

"The primary purpose of LEAP is to enact meaningful energy reduction efforts that will also help to create jobs and reduce green house gas emissions for our entire community," said Leon County At-Large Commissioner Cliff Thaell, the driving force behind the creation of LEAP. "Through LEAP, property owners will be able to lower their utility bills, reduce the up-front cost of energy retrofits, and add value to their property; this is a win-win-win."

The FHFA regulation, which was announced in July, would prohibit home mortgages with energy assessments from being acquired by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the two federal private corporations that purchase or guarantee more than 50 percent of the residential mortgages in the nation. The FHFA regulation upholds determinations by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac that property-based energy assessments in these programs, a growing national trend more commonly known as PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy), are not valid, contradicting long-standing principles of state and federal laws. For more information regarding the complaint, contact the Leon County Public Information Office at (850) 606-5300 or by [email](#).

DCA to Host Post-Disaster Redevelopment Workshops

The Florida Department of Community Affairs and the Florida Division of Emergency Management are hosting regional workshops on post-disaster redevelopment planning. The workshops will present the best practices guidebook "Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning: A Guide for Florida Communities." A funding opportunity for local governments wishing to develop post-disaster redevelopment plans will be announced and details on the application process will be shared. Webinars are also being offered. Pre-register to ensure that you have the GoToWebinar application downloaded and any system or administrative issues are resolved prior to the workshop date. For more information, please feel free to contact Julie Dennis, Florida Department of Community Affairs at julie.dennis@dca.state.fl.us or (850) 922-1825 or Emily Meyer, Florida Division of Emergency Management at emily.meyer@em.myflorida.com or (850) 414-7768. [[More](#)]

ICLEI Releases STAR Index Sustainability Goals & Principles

The STAR Community Index™ (STAR), a national standard to create more sustainable, livable communities, has released its Sustainability Goals and Guiding Principles. The 81 goals and 10 guiding principles collectively define community-scale sustainability and set a national standard for local governments. The goals serve as the foundation of the STAR Community Index-- the forthcoming national rating system that will offer cities and counties a roadmap for creating healthy, inclusive, and prosperous communities. In addition to environmental issues, the STAR Index includes economic and society goals such as education, arts and culture. The STAR Community Index is being developed by ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA (ICLEI USA) in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), National League of Cities (NLC), and Center for American Progress. [View [STAR Index](#)]

Florida Falls to 30th in Energy Efficiency

The American Council for an Energy Efficiency Economy (ACEEE) released their 2010 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard recently, which indicates Florida fell to #30 in the nation, a decline from its 2009 ranking at 23rd. Florida lost a half point in "state government initiatives" from 2009 to 2010 but gained a point in its "transportation" score. This is the second year in a row Florida has fallen in position, with an overall loss of 11 positions since the Scorecard was first published in 2008. However, Florida has increased its total score each year, from 16 points in 2008 to 16.5 in 2009 and 17 in 2010, out of a possible 50 maximum points each year. Florida's drop in ranking is

a result of other states making larger gains in their total scores. View [Florida report](#) or the [complete Scorecard](#)

Palm Bay Offers Green Building Incentives

The City of Palm Bay recently adopted a green building ordinance that provides expedited permit review, reduced permit fees, increased signage allowances, and promotion of the project on the City's official website. To qualify for the incentives, projects must be certified by the Florida Green Building Coalition Standards (Homes, Commercial or Hi-Rise) or by the LEED Commercial Building Standard. The City will also issue a proclamation to the participants, recognizing the achievements under the City of Palm Bay Incentive Program.

Tallahassee Named in top 40 Cities in the World

The City of Tallahassee is one of the top 40 Cities in the World, as determined by The International Awards for Livable Communities (The LivCom Awards). The City was recently named a finalist for this prestigious, international award, and community representatives are invited to participate in the 2010 LivCom finals from November 4-8, in Chicago. FGBC accomplishments will be highlighted in a 40-minute video presentation at the awards program. Congratulations to the Mayor John Marks and General Manager Cynthia Barber.

Battery Recycling - What You Need to Know

Americans purchase nearly 3 billion dry cell batteries each year, so we thought it important to provide some disposal tips. Under Florida law, it is illegal to discard nickel-cadmium or small sealed lead acid rechargeable batteries or products containing such rechargeable batteries in the trash. The batteries must be recycled or sent to a facility permitted to dispose of those batteries. Many stores that sell batteries, phones or electronics will take used batteries back for recycling. In Florida, homeowners can take batteries to their county Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program for proper management. Learn about your county's program and other items they will accept such as fluorescent lamps, paint, pesticides, cleansers and other hazardous household items by visiting the FL DEP website. <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/batteries/default.htm>

DEP Kicks Off Greenways and Trails Month with New Visit Florida Trails Website Launch

Touting Florida's award-winning trails as a major tourism attraction alongside beaches, golf courses and theme parks, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Greenways and Trails today joined VISIT FLORIDA to celebrate October as Greenways and Trails Month with the launch of a new trails website. The website highlights the benefits trails provide Florida's environment and tourism industry through healthy recreational opportunities, a reduced carbon footprint and an affordable alternative to traditional vacation activities. The website features more than 100 trails and serves as a one-stop-shop for residents and guests looking to plan an eco-vacation or simply take a day-trip. The website also provides a gateway to nearby businesses, outfitters, restaurants and overnight accommodations. [\[More\]](#)

EPA Picks State Capitals to Create Models of Green Design

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) committed to help the capital cities of five states pursue high quality green development that includes cleaning up and recycling vacant lands, providing greater housing and transportation choices, and reducing infrastructure and energy costs. Through its new Greening America's Capitals program, the EPA will fund private sector experts to provide sustainable design assistance to Boston; Jefferson City, Mo.; Hartford, Conn.; Charleston, W.Va.; and Little Rock, Ark. The cities will demonstrate how to develop sustainable designs that create interesting, unique neighborhoods with multiple social, economic, environmental and public health benefits.

"America's cities can be the engines of green innovation, leading the way in new technologies, energy efficiency and sustainable development," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "EPA and our colleagues in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities are working with capital cities throughout the country to spark the sustainable, green innovations that can meet the needs of multiple communities, and keep our cities on the cutting edge of the global green economy."

Greening America's Capitals is a new project of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an agreement between EPA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to coordinate federal housing, transportation, and environmental investments; protect public health and the environment; promote equitable development; and help address the challenges of climate change. HUD and DOT were involved in the city review and selection process and will be providing technical expertise on relevant portions of each project.

The five state capitals were selected from a total of 38 cities that responded to a solicitation of interest by EPA in

June 2010. The agency will organize teams of urban planners and landscape architects to provide direct, customized technical assistance as requested by each community.

Greening America's Capitals is not a grant program, but provides direct technical assistance to communities by working with private sector experts and leveraging partnerships, such as with HUD and DOT, to help communities consider development options. In addition to helping the selected state capitals build civic pride and a greener future, this assistance will help create models that other cities can look to in creating their own sustainable designs. For more information: <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/greencapitals.htm>

EPA Challenges Colleges to Recycle at Football Games

As part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2010 Game Day Challenge, colleges across the country will compete to see who can reduce, reuse, and recycle the most waste. Registration for the competition is now open and the winning colleges will be announced in November.

Any college or university in the U.S. with a football team can compete, and register through September 30. The challenge is for schools to design a waste reduction plan for one home football game in October and measure the results. Schools can collect common materials for recycling including paper, beverage containers, cardboard, and food to be donated and composted. The amount of waste generated and recycled will determine which school is the greenest.

Schools can win in several categories:

- ◆ least amount of waste generated per attendee
- ◆ greatest greenhouse gas reductions
- ◆ highest recycling rate
- ◆ highest organics reduction rate (i.e., food donation and composting)
- ◆ highest combined recycling and composting rate.

To register for the Game Day Challenge: <https://my.re-trac.com/gameday>

More information on the Game Day Challenge: <http://epa.gov/gameday/>

More information on WasteWise program: <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/wastewise/index.htm>

Going Green Earns County Gold

Martin County recently earned the FGBC Green Local Government certification and found the process fostered communication among departments that led to cooperative efforts to reduce costs and reinforces the vision of providing a sustainable quality of living. [\[More\]](#)

St. Pete College to Host Energy Policy Workshop

St. Petersburg College is hosting a collaborative workshop on November 5, 2010, to help design a Florida energy policy for consideration by the Florida Legislature. The consensus-building workshop will develop priorities in the areas of (1) Clean Energy; (2) Energy Efficiency; (3) the Environment (4) Workforce Training and (5) Research with a focus on job creation and economic development opportunities. Stakeholders are encouraged to participate. For more information, please visit www.collaborativelabs.com.

Higher Efficiency Standards for Refrigerators

The U.S. Department of Energy recently announced the release of a new proposed energy efficiency standard for residential refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers and freezers. The standard, as proposed, could save consumers as much as \$18.6 billion over thirty years. DOE has also dramatically ramped up enforcement of appliance standards with nearly 70 different non-compliant products already removed from the market. [\[More\]](#)

EPA Launches Green Power Community Challenge

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is kicking off its national "Green Power Community Challenge," a year-long campaign to encourage cities, towns, villages and Native American tribes to use renewable energy and fight climate change. Purchases of green power help to prevent greenhouse gas emissions and also help accelerate the development of new renewable energy capacity across the United States. [\[More\]](#)

EPA, DOT Moving to 60mpg Fuel Efficiencies by 2025

Making good on a commitment made by President Obama in May, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Transportation today announced progress in developing standards that will dramatically reduce the fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions of cars, SUVs, and pickup trucks in model years 2017 to 2025. The announcement follows the adoption earlier this year of standards boosting average fuel economy to 34.1 miles per gallon by 2016. At the high end of the range presented by EPA and DOT, vehicles would average about 60 miles per gallon by 2025. A fuel economy standard of 60 miles per gallon would more than double the oil savings of the 2012-2016 standards adopted in April of this year, resulting in savings from the two stages together of over 5 million barrels of oil per day in 2030, according to ACEEE analysis. Some scenarios considered by the agencies include substantial sales of plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles by 2025. These vehicles can dramatically reduce oil consumption, but their climate benefits are less certain. Until carbon emissions from U.S. power plants are greatly reduced, an electric vehicle may emit more than a hybrid vehicle. [\[More\]](#)

Saving 2 Billion Gallons of Water, One Community at a Time *Responsible Bathroom Tour Arrives in Florida to Highlight Water Conservation*

Water shortages will hit 36 states in the U.S. by 2013, and many communities in Florida are already experiencing extreme water shortages. At the same time, 78% of consumers are looking for ways to reduce their household utility bills, including water bills. Based on an average four-person household, using water-saving bathroom products could amount to an annual savings of \$293 in water costs and 48,326 gallons of water. Buying and building green saves money.

Drops of water are hard to count, but gallons can be measured. The number of gallons of water saved is on the rise, thanks to The Responsible Bathroom Water Conservation Tour, sponsored by American Standard. The Tour has been crisscrossing the U.S. since April, with the goal to conserve two billion gallons of water by the Tour's end December 1. So far, the Tour is nearly halfway to its goal. The tour intends to save water by replacing old or leaking bathroom fixtures with innovative, water-efficient plumbing products.

To help visualize what two billion gallons of water looks like, here are two statistics:

- If the two billion gallons of water was placed in one-cup containers and placed in a row, the line would stretch to the moon and back 7 times.
- If the two billion gallons of water was placed in bathtubs holding 50 gallons each, and the bathtubs placed end-to-end, they would stretch around the planet's Equator 1.5 times.

Since water conservation starts at home, the Tour will show how an average four-person household can save 48,326 gallons of water a year using water-saving bathroom fixtures. To help compute gallons saved in households, use the online water savings calculator at www.theresponsiblebathroomtour.com/calculator. The Responsible Bathroom Water Conservation Tour will feature both economic and ecological points, including:

- Hands-on demonstrations of the newest water-saving showerheads, faucets, and toilets, featured in a 44-foot-long, walk-through mobile showroom. Tour ambassadors on each truck will explain the latest products and offer user demonstrations.
- Calculations of how much water and money consumers can save with efficient bathroom products.

www.responsiblebathroomtour.com

FRACCA Receives Overwhelming Response to its EPA Clean Diesel Rebate

The response to the Clean Diesel Rebate program offered by FRACCA and the Southeast Construction Associations Coalition for Clean Diesel was a success! The application period for the program closed on October 15, 2010. Requests came in from Alabama, Florida, and Georgia for the repower/replacement of 91 pieces of off-road diesel construction equipment. The total amount requested for rebates was over \$4-million, exceeding the funds available for rebates under this program, which is approximately \$1.3-million.

As part of the next step in the Clean Diesel Rebate process, a series of Diesel Emission Reduction Workshops will be held. Workshops are open to all interested in emission reduction, idle reduction, alternative fuels, EPA and OSHA compliance issues, and the health impacts of diesel emissions. Attending one of the program diesel emission workshops and holding an on-site idle reduction operator training is required for Clean Diesel Rebate recipients as part of their rebate agreement.

Educational support and instructors for the workshops will be provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Enterprise Fleet Management, and members of the Southeast Construction

Associations for Clean Diesel, including Flint Equipment, Nortrax, and Ditch Witch of Central Florida. Continuing education units (CEUs) will be offered. [\[More\]](#)

DEP Designates Eight Green Lodgings

In late September, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) designated eight new Green Lodging properties. In total, the Florida Green Lodging Program now has 658 designated properties with more than 160,000 designated green guest rooms. The eight new designations include:

- ◆ Comfort Inn, Orlando
- ◆ Four Points by Sheraton Orlando Studio City, Orlando
- ◆ Hilton Garden Inn Tampa, Oldsmar
- ◆ Hyatt Beach House, Key West
- ◆ Quality Inn International, Orlando
- ◆ Quality Inn Plaza, Orlando
- ◆ Roadway Inn, Orlando
- ◆ W Fort Lauderdale, Fort Lauderdale

To become a designated member of the voluntary program, lodging facilities adopt cost-saving green practices that conserve energy, reduce water consumption, protect air quality and reduce waste. The Florida Green Lodging Program includes facilities of all sizes, from local bed and breakfast inns to resorts with thousands of rooms. Designated facilities statewide also include all Florida Walt Disney World resorts, Florida State Park cabins and now all seven properties that compose the Orlando-based Rosen Hotels & Resorts collection.

Launched in 2004, the Florida Green Lodging Program establishes environmental guidelines for lodging facilities to conserve natural resources and prevent pollution. As incentive for the designation, the state recommends the designated Green Lodging properties to companies and trade organizations seeking environmentally conscientious lodging and convention facilities. For more information about the Florida Green Lodging Program, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/greenlodging.