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Bill to Extend Commercial Building Tax Deductions Proposed in US Senate

A bill introduced into the U.S. Senate seeks to extend tax deductions for building upgrades, make it easier for taxpayers to get the deductions, and give more money back. The bipartisan legislation introduced on Sept. 27, 2012 is called the Commercial Building Modernization Act (S.3591) and it would reform the existing Energy Efficient Commercial Building Tax Deduction, which is widely known by its federal tax code section: [179D](#). [\[More\]](#)

Florida Realtors Release September Data

Monthly Snapshot

Single-Family Homes

One Year Change

+2.0%

Closed Sales

+7.4%

Median Sales Price

-31.5%

Homes for Sale

New Listings were down 0.5 percent for detached homes and 7.5 percent for attached properties. Pending Sales increased 40.1 percent for single-family homes and 30.6 percent for townhouse-condo properties. The Median Sales Price was up 7.4 percent to \$145,000 for detached homes and 18.8 percent to \$105,736 for attached properties. Months Supply of Inventory decreased 39.8 percent for single-family units and 39.0 percent for townhouse-condo units.

Enterprise Seeks Green Affordable Housing Technical Experts

Enterprise Communities is soliciting submissions for Technical Assistance Providers to support its Enterprise Green Communities initiative. Its objective is to expand the delivery of technical assistance to local green affordable housing developers across Enterprise markets. Qualifications shall relate to professional services that enable affordable housing developers and their project teams to design, develop, construct, retrofit, and maintain high performing green housing through effective, practical, best practice strategies. Once selected, TA Providers will be publicly listed in the Enterprise Green Communities Technical Assistance Providers Database and will be eligible to respond to Requests for Proposals distributed exclusively to this group. [\[More\]](#)

Top 5 Green Jobs on the Rise

[\[More\]](#)

'Girls Gone Green' TV Show Hopes to Spark Green Careers

[\[More\]](#)

FGBC In The News: Green Pioneers [\[More\]](#)

Quick Links

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Certification News

Local Government

Miami-Dade County

Certified: 10/11/12
Score: 57%
Level: Gold
Version: 3

Osceola County

Certified: 10/5/12
Score: 31%
Level: Silver
Version: 4

Palm Beach County

Certified: 9/4/12
Score: 42%
Level: Silver
Version: 4

Certification Counts

"Florida Green" Certifications To Date

Homes

1,240 Homes in 2012
5,241 total as of 10/5/12

Commercial Buildings

Registered: 15
Certified: 7

Hi-Rise

Registered: 4
Certified: 1

Land Development

Registered: 61
Certified: 16

[\[Application\]](#)

Home Price Appreciation Helps Housing Move Forward

Sparked by rising home prices across much of the nation, the housing recovery is now under way, but fiscal uncertainties and other challenges could result in a bumpy ride in the coming months, according to economists participating in a recent National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) webinar on the construction and economic outlook.

"We're seeing a more robust housing sector than many other parts of the economy," said NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe. "One of the reasons is we have finally begun to see on a national scale that house prices are picking up again."

Crowe cited a number of other factors that are carrying the housing momentum forward. These include:

- Pent-up household formations
- Rising consumer confidence
- Increasing builder confidence in all three legs of the industry: remodeling, multifamily and single-family
- Growing rental demand
- More than 100 metros currently on the NAHB/First American Improving Markets Index

However, Crowe offered several cautionary factors that continue to put a drag on housing activity at this time - including builders who are experiencing difficulties in obtaining production credit, qualified buyers who are unable to obtain mortgage loans, inaccurate appraisals, seriously delinquent mortgages that are at least 90 days late or in foreclosure, and a limited inventory of developed lots in certain markets.

Other causes contributing to uncertainty in the marketplace include the looming "fiscal cliff" that will trigger mandatory budget cuts and tax increases at the beginning of next year, pending Dodd-Frank Act regulations that are making financial institutions hesitant to lend since they don't know how the new rules will affect them, tax reform, and the future role of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in the nation's housing finance system.

NAHB is forecasting a 21 percent increase in single-family starts this year to 528,000 units and a further 26 percent climb to 665,000 units in 2013.

Multifamily housing starts are expected to rise 26 percent this year to 224,000 units and 6 percent in 2013 to 238,000 units. Delving into the state statistics behind the national numbers,

Local Government

Registered: 56
Certified: 43

Multi-Family

In 2012
26 Buildings
302 Units

Florida Water Star Certifications NWFMD and SRWMD Areas

2 Homes in 2012

Education Opportunities

December 7, 2012 Certifying Agent Annual Active Status Verification Course

Gainesville, FL

[\[Register\]](#)

April 24-25, 2013 FGBC Certifying Agent Designation Course

Florida Solar Energy
Center

Cocoa, FL

[\[Register\]](#)

August 21-22, 2013 FGBC Certifying Agent Designation Course

Florida Solar Energy
Center

Cocoa, FL

[\[Register\]](#)

Calendar of Events

Oct. 30, 2012 Sustainable Communities - One Day 7th Annual Workshop

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast
Florida Event and
Conference Center
Sarasota, FL

[Register](#)

Nov. 1-3, 2012 FHBA Fall Conference

Renaissance Vinoy
St. Petersburg, FL

[Register](#)

Nov. 14-16, 2012 USGBC -GreenBuild Int'l Conference and Expo

Moscone Center
San Francisco, CA

[Register](#)

Robert Denk, NAHB's assistant vice president for forecasting and analysis, cited a range of differences among the states in the amount of pain suffered during the recession and the progress that is being made in recovering. The hardest hit states -- such as Arizona, **Florida**, California and Nevada -- bottomed out the furthest during the downturn and still have much ground to make up.

On a national basis, housing starts are projected to get back to 55 percent of normal production by the end of next year and 70 percent of normal by the end of 2014, Denk said.

Florida Communities of Excellence Call for Nominations Announced

The Florida Communities of Excellence Awards is a program that recognizes positive and productive initiatives taking place in condominiums, homeowners associations and cooperatives across Florida. Submissions for the 2013 Awards will be accepted between September 24, 2012 and January 15, 2013. There is no entry fee for submitting a nomination and the entire process is completed online. Small communities and large communities are judged separately and there is no limit on the number of categories in which a community can compete. For more information, please visit www.communitiesofexcellence.net

Finalists will be announced in March 2013 and all finalists will be invited to the annual Conference and Awards Gala, Friday, April 5, 2013 at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront Hotel. The event is free for current community association managers, board members and residents, and includes educational sessions, sponsor exhibits and the Gala Reception & Awards Ceremony.

For Appliances, Does Energy-Efficiency Sell? Maybe Not!

Experts say many consumers care less about Energy Star ratings, more about features that happen to be "green." A new study suggests that energy-efficient products now dominate sales in some appliance and electronic categories and lag in others. Whether or not people buy those products may in some cases have less to do with eco-friendliness and utility bill savings than with the products' secondary perks.

Energy Star products account for close to 100 percent of the sales of some appliances like dishwashers and televisions, but they command relatively little of the markets for desktop computers and freezers, making up 17 percent and 21 percent, respectively, according to a new report by the U.S. Energy Information Administration. The report measured market penetration of Energy Star products in 2011.

Experts who study consumer behavior say that in some

**Nov. 15, 2012
HVAC Design &
Installation**

UNF University Center
12000 Alumni Drive
Jacksonville, FL
[\[More\]](#)

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**FGBC Committee
Meetings**

Affordable Housing
3rd Thursday Monthly
10 a.m.

Board of Directors
2nd Wednesday Monthly
3 p.m.

Commercial
1st Tuesday Monthly
3 p.m.

Education
1st Thursday
2 p.m.

Hi-Rise
3rd Tuesday Monthly
11 a.m.

Homes
2nd Tuesday Monthly
2 p.m.

Land Development
4th Wednesday
Quarterly
4 p.m.

Local Government
1st Tuesday Monthly
10:30 a.m.

**Membership and
Programs &
Promotions Joint Mtg**
3rd Thursday Monthly
4 p.m.

cases, side benefits of energy efficiency may be driving adoption of the Energy Star-rated products rather than the star itself. Energy Star notebook computers, for example, have one of the highest market penetration rates at 75 percent, but they also have one particular perk consumers really want: longer battery life. Compare that with desktop computers, which stay plugged in and which consumers may buy more for their speed and compatibility with certain programs and games.

With washing machines, too, energy efficiency happens to coincide with a feature that consumers are warming to. Energy Star washers now hold 60 percent of the market, and most of those are frontloading models, which consumers believe are gentler on clothing, according to Lowell Ungar, director of policy at Alliance to Save Energy. "People like the way they wash clothes," Ungar says.

And in many categories, consumers who go upscale may be unwittingly going green. Experts say most premium appliances on the market now carry the Energy Star rating, so the more energy efficient fridge is also likely to have a stainless steel door or a great ice maker. That means people might pay extra for the Energy Star product even if they don't think the energy savings alone justify the premium price, according to the EIA. "Even if the Energy Star product is not inherently better, it's become kind of a brand of quality," Ungar says. "These are often better products as well."

Trivia for the Week:

If you are like me, the political rudeness among candidates and the fact distortions are so maddening, I don't even want to vote this year, let alone watch any debates. But I find some solace in the cadre of "fact checkers." Here are some of the more recent "truths."

- The actual share of government-backed green companies that have gone under is around 1 percent, according to Gene Karpinski, President, League of Conservative Voters.
- Moody's Analytics, predict roughly 12 million jobs will be created over the next four years - no matter who is elected president.
- In reality, the federal deficit has fallen slightly on Obama's watch, but he fell far short of cutting it in half as he pledged in February 2009. The deficit fell 16% during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, the Treasury Department said Oct. 16. The department said tax receipts rose as the economy grew, and spending to counter the effects of the recession and its aftermath declined.
- Romney claimed that President Obama "put \$90 billion, like 50 years' worth of breaks, into -- into solar and wind, to Solyndra and Fisker and Tesla and

Ener1." But as CNN noted, "not even half" of the \$90 billion that was allocated has gone to green companies, and "not all that money has been spent."

- A Joint Committee on Taxation analysis found that the five largest oil companies alone receive \$2.4 billion -- or more than half -- of the \$4 billion in subsidies that the president wants to eliminate.
- Romney has come out in favor of letting the Production Tax Credit for wind energy expire, a move that the American Wind Energy Association estimates will cost 37,000 jobs nationwide.
- Gas prices are still 34 cents below their all-time high during the Bush administration. In the summer of 2008, the national average hit \$4.05 a gallon.
- There's no provision in the tax code that gives a company a specific deduction for moving jobs overseas - although they can take the same deduction for business expenses as they would for any other expense that comes off their bottom line. And once a subsidiary of an American company sets up shop overseas, federal tax collectors have no jurisdiction over those profits until they're sent back to the United States. So no, there are no specific tax breaks for shipping jobs overseas. But the effect of the tax code does allow companies to realize tax advantages for doing so.