

June 30, 2015

Florida Budget Maneuvers Result In Environmental Funding Net Loss

On June 19th, the Florida Legislature passed its budget for the 2015-2016 fiscal year, among other things slashing the state's environmental budget by nearly \$50 million from last year. The final budget allocation for Amendment 1 included:

- \$17 million to Florida Forever for land acquisition
- \$45 million for springs protection and restoration
- \$75 million for Everglades restoration

Despite 4.2 million Floridians voting in favor of increased funding for land and water conservation, these allocations are far below what the voters of Florida intended when they voted "yes" on Amendment 1 last November.

Instead of funding land acquisition, springs protection and Everglades restoration the legislature chose to use over \$230 million from Amendment 1 funds to pay existing agency operating expenses. These expenses have historically been funded through general revenue or other trust funds. Now those costs have been moved over to Amendment 1, leading to a net loss in environmental funding. [[More](#)]

New ICF Blocks Made From Recycled Styrofoam

A new company in Portland, Oregon is gearing up to manufacture large quantities of the latest product in the ICF (insulated concrete forms) world. [BluBloc](#) offers a twist on standard ICF products - it uses recycled styrofoam instead of manufacturing new for use in the forms.

[BluBloc](#) is 85% recycled polystyrene foam (styrofoam)

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and 15% cement. Like other ICF products, the "blocks" interlock to form the outside structure of a building. Cement is then poured inside the forms, creating a solid and interconnected structure. From there, interior and exterior treatments are added. ICF can be used in virtually any type or size of building, residential or commercial.

The advantages of ICF include increased insulation properties, soundproofing, and disaster, pest, and moisture resistance. One of the down sides has been that most products are made of new petroleum-based styrofoam. BluBloc takes post-consumer styrofoam, grinds it up, adds cement as a binder, and casts its forms from this material. [[More](#)]

Mitigating Noise is Priority In Multi-Family Housing

A major complaint of higher density residential living is noise from neighbors within the building, noise from HVAC systems, and noise from the city streets surrounding the building. The U.S. Census Bureau's *American Housing Survey*, conducted every other year, consistently finds that noise is the most frequently cited housing complaint. Noise intrudes on privacy, a most highly prized attribute of home. Most people want a home that offers a peaceful and serene retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life.

As residents become more affluent, they demand higher quality neighborhoods and transport options, such as attractive streets, minimal noise and air pollution, and convenient and comfortable public transit services." Achieving the goals of higher density housing that make convenient and efficient public transit possible requires solutions to the problems of noise from within a building and from the surrounding city intruding on living spaces.

Mitigating noise from within buildings is achieved during construction. In Ranches, Rowhouses, and Railroad Flats, Christine Hunter notes the amount of noise that is transmitted from unit to unit in a multi-family building depends on its structure, the materials used for finishes, the mechanical systems, and the way that the walls between units are built. She says that acoustic engineers and architects manage to eliminate sound transmission in technical applications, but these approaches are rarely applied in residential

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construction. Building codes do specify minimum standards of sound privacy, but most building inspection departments rely on the building architect's recommendation, and what is actually constructed and how it is constructed may not conform to the specifications. Where building codes often specify at least a 50 STC (Sound Transmission Class) and a 50 IIC (Impact Isolation Class) standard for sound transmission, most building inspection departments do not require field-testing. [\[More\]](#)

Residential Energy Guarantee Puts Ceiling On New-Home Energy Costs



Residential Energy Guarantee®

For the first time ever, Bonded Builders Warranty Group (BBWG) - the nation's largest new-home warranty company - is offering a program that provides an innovative marketing tool to home builders wanting to sell more certified-green homes. Called the Residential Energy

Guarantee, this patent-pending program, puts financial teeth into builder claims that green homes save money for cash-strapped families.

Moreover, Residential Energy Guarantee is unique in that it guarantees ALL energy used in a home: electric or natural-gas heating and cooling, as well as all other energy costs from lighting and major appliances right down to can openers and power drills. All of it. Here's how the program works. [\[More\]](#)

Solar Panels Increase the Value of Homes

By now, most people know that a residential solar system can help the environment and save you money on your electricity bills. But, even further, Slingshot Power notes that studies show a rooftop solar system can significantly increase the value of your home. It may even help you sell your home faster. Here's how.

A recent [study](#) by [Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory](#) of 23,000 home sales in 8 states between 2002 and 2013 found that buyers were willing to pay

Education Opportunities

October 13-14, 2015 FGBC Certifying Agent Destination Class

FSEC
Cocoa, FL
[\[Register\]](#)

[Energy Star Webinars](#)

[Building America Webinars](#)

Calendar of Events

July 16-18, 2015

SEBC
Orange County Convention
Center
Orlando, FL
[\[More\]](#)

July 30- August 2, 2015

Florida AIA Convention
Boca Raton, FL
[\[More\]](#)

August 13-15, 2015

**FL League of Cities
Annual Conference**
Orlando, FL
[\[More\]](#)

August 19-23, 2015

**FL Realtors Annual
Conference**
Orlando, FL
[\[More\]](#)

Aug. 30- Sept. 2, 2015

**Florida Housing
Conference**
Orlando, FL
[\[More\]](#)

Certification News

Commercial
Registered: 34
Certified: 13

High Rise
Registered: 38
Certified: 9

Homes
Registered: 10,549
Certified: 10,192

Single-Family: 7,635
Multi-Family: 2,557

Land Developments
Registered: 61

significantly more for homes with solar panels. In fact, for an average size 3.6 kilowatt system, they were willing to pay up to \$15,000 more than they would for "the same house without solar energy."

The larger the solar system, the larger the premium buyers were willing to pay. On average, a rooftop solar system adds \$4.00 per kilowatt to a home's value.

Here's more good news, though: The Lawrence Berkeley study also found that homes equipped with solar panels tend to sell 20% faster than similar homes without them. [[More](#)]

Forbes: Does Florida Discriminate Against Solar? Answer: Yes! And Consumers Lose

Does the law of Florida discriminate against solar power companies? The short answer is "yes." The long answer is also "yes," but with the caveat that consumers - as opposed to solar companies - are the true victims.

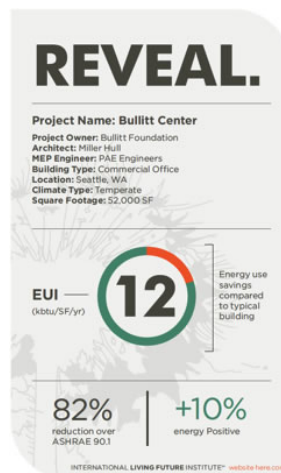
Florida prohibits retail sales of electricity by anyone other than government-sanctioned utility companies. The prohibition does not extend to leasing generating equipment because leases do not involve the sale of electricity. [[More](#)]

Creators of the Living Building Challenge REVEAL New Energy Labeling System

Finding a building's energy use can be surprisingly hard. Putting it in context with data from other buildings is even harder.

The International Living Future Institute (ILFI), the organization that created the Living Building Challenge, will begin issuing a new energy label called "Reveal" in late 2015. Any project with measured data could show the label.

The main feature of the label is



Certified: 13

Local Government
Registered: 77
Certified: 56

Recent Certifications

University Park of Boca
Location: Boca Raton
Type: High-Rise
Certified: 6/25/15
Score: 133
Level: Silver

Monroe County Fire Station #8
Location: Stock Island
Type: Commercial
Certified: 5/26/15
Score: 168
Level: Silver

Recent Registrations:

Palmetto Promenade
Location: Boca Raton
Type: High Rise
Size: 453,240 s.f.

Lexington Court
Location: Orlando
Type: High Rise
Size: 249,858 s.f.

FGBC Committee Meetings

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

Commercial
1st Tuesday
Monthly
2 p.m.

Education
1st Thursday
Monthly
3 p.m.

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

Homes & Affordable Housing
(Joint Meeting)
2nd Tuesday
Monthly

a display of energy use intensity (EUI), or kBtu per square foot, and a percentage improvement over the ASHRAE 90.1 energy standard.

Participating buildings would be benchmarked against an ILFI database displayed on its website. That could be a limitation: it takes a lot of work to build energy databases with enough samples of building types and locations that benchmarking is meaningful. Reveal is not yet tying into other databases, but ILFI indicated forging relationships with other tools like Energy Star Portfolio Manager is at the top of their list. [[More](#)]

\$3.9 Million in Brownfield Cleanup Granted to 9 Florida Locations

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced at the end of May the selection of nine communities in Florida to receive more than \$3.9 million in grant investments. This investment will provide communities with funding necessary to assess, clean and redevelop contaminated properties, boost local economies and leverage jobs while protecting public health and the environment.

The Florida Brownfield recipients are:

- City of Cocoa, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 for assessment grant petroleum)
- City of Jacksonville, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)
- City of Live Oak, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)
- Manatee County, Fla. (\$300,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)
- City of Opa-locka, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)
- City of Palatka, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)
- City of Pasco, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances, \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum and \$195,000 cleanup grant for hazardous substances)

2 p.m.

Land Development

4th Wednesday
Bi-monthly
2 p.m.

Local Government

3rd Wednesday
Monthly
10:30 a.m.

Membership and Programs & Promotions

(Joint Meeting)
3rd Thursday
Monthly
2 p.m.

Funding Opportunities

[St. Johns River
WMDWater Programs](#)

[South Florida WMD
Water Programs](#)

[Southwest Florida WMD
Water Programs](#)

**FHFC Multifamily Energy
Retrofit Program (MERP)**
[[More](#)]

Job Opportunities

[APA Florida Job Board](#)

[Green Dream Jobs](#)

[Florida Facility Managers
Assn Job Board](#)

FGBC Welcomes New Members

Alexandra Estevez
[Stellar Homes Group](#)
Fort Lauderdale

Melissa Urrego
[Stellar Homes Group](#)
Fort Lauderdale

Walter Stachowicz
Conservation Plus
Inverness
(Rejoin)

Stephanie Thomas-Rees
[New South Access &
Environmental Solution](#)

- City of Sanford, Fla. (\$200,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)
- Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, Fla. (\$300,000 assessment grant for hazardous substances and \$200,000 assessment grant for petroleum)

[\[More\]](#)

Florida's Advanced Energy Market is \$6.2B In 2014, Surpassing Agricultural Exports

The Sunshine State's population is growing rapidly, which means increasing electricity and vehicle fuel requirements. Florida also has one of the highest rates of home electricity consumption in the United States, due to the need for air conditioning much of the year (and with electricity typically used for heating as well). In 2013, Florida's retail electricity sales to the residential sector were second only to Texas. **For all these requirements, Florida needs energy that is secure, clean, and affordable - that is, advanced energy.**

In the past, advanced energy has enjoyed policy and regulatory support in Florida at the state level and in cities such as Gainesville. However, advanced energy progress has been slowed due the removal of the \$2 per watt solar rebate as part of retooling the state's solar program and a roll back of the state's energy efficiency goals. Still, Florida is showing leadership and potential in multiple areas, as detailed in [Advanced Energy in Florida](#):

- Florida is third in the nation for rooftop solar potential and 13th in installed capacity.
- Florida has the fourth highest commercial Combined Heat and Power (CHP) potential, at 5,339 MW.
- Florida Power & Light Co. has deployed almost 5 million smart meters to its entire customer base.
- Drive Electric Florida forecasts an increase in plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PEVs) in Southeast Florida, going from just 1,074 PEVs today to 74,000 within a decade.
- Florida has the sixth highest potential for biogas generation from landfills, wastewater

New Smyrna Beach
(Rejoin)

Ray Jackson
[Ray Jackson Construction](#)
Santa Rosa Beach

Julie Christesen
CDM Smith
Tallahassee

Tim Marine
[Building Designs, Inc.](#)
Sebring
(Rejoin)

- treatment, and organic waste.
- Florida is home to some of the first commercial cellulosic biofuel plants in the world.

The total advanced energy market in Florida is estimated at \$6.2 billion in 2014, bigger than the agricultural exports industry (\$4.2 billion).⁴ This total represents an estimated 3-4% of the total U.S. market. Advanced energy in Florida is led by the Building Efficiency segment, with \$2.9 billion in revenue in 2014. [[More](#)]

EPA Releases Environmental Mapping Tool

The Environmental Protection Agency has release [EJSCREEN](#), a web-based mapping tool that will give communities environmental and health information across the United States.

The tool provides high-resolution maps showing nationally-based demographic and environmental information designed to give users a better understanding of environmental issues in a particular area. While EJSCREEN only includes data on a national scale, the EPA says it's an important first step in identifying and assisting communities overburdened with pollution.

The screening information may be of interest to residents as well as property owners and other stakeholders. It can also support a wide range of research and policy goals, the EPA says. [[More](#)]

Floridians Want Direct Market Access to Solar From Neighboring Consumers and Businesses

As consumer groups, political organizations ranging across the spectrum of philosophies from liberal to conservative, utilities, and others consider whether the energy marketplace system in Florida should be changed to allow consumers and businesses to sell excess solar-generated power directly to buyers, the most recent Saint Leo University Polling Institute Florida survey finds 78 percent of respondents in favor of the idea.

In the Saint Leo University Polling Institute's March 2015 statewide survey, respondents answered

another question about consumer use of solar power, asked in the context of what personal steps people would pursue to reduce carbon pollution. In that survey, 41 percent said they would be willing to install or purchase alternative energy sources such as solar for their homes. By contrast, only 14 percent said they had already done so. [\[More\]](#)

Multifamily Energy Efficiency Retrofits Offer Multiple Benefits

Energy efficiency retrofits for multifamily buildings offer a host of benefits beyond energy savings to building owners and tenants. The problem is that efficiency programs that spur investment in this kind of work are not always assessed fairly.

Key to a multifamily building owner's bottom line is keeping vacancy and turnover rates low. Many savvy building owners realize that energy efficiency retrofits to their buildings can lead to a host of other benefits beyond energy savings that help their bottom line. When tenants are more comfortable and have lower, more manageable utility bills, they don't move as often.

When applying cost-effectiveness tests to multifamily programs, administrators should consider the fact that multifamily property owners have different costs and financial concerns than single-family homeowners. Tenants also experience multiple benefits, and these too affect the building owner's bottom line. Multifamily buildings vary with respect to who is responsible for utility bills for major energy loads, and who realizes the savings. Therefore administrators must pay particularly close attention to calculating costs and benefits in multifamily cost-effectiveness testing.

Societal benefits are the benefits of energy efficiency improvements that accrue to the public at large. For example, reduced energy costs for multifamily households can have a positive impact on local economic activity. Money spent on utility bills is more likely to leave the local economy than money spent on local goods and services. [\[More\]](#)