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FGBC Green Home Retrofit Guidelines Available

Homeowners wanting a do-it-yourself guide for greening their homes will find a new resource available from the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC). The FGBC Florida Green Home Retrofit Guidelines were developed to assist homeowners and remodelers in making home improvement decisions to improve the efficiency, health and environmental friendliness of their homes. The guide includes assessments in five categories, including energy, water, health, materials, and durability. Also included is an option for homeowners to receive third-party verification that efficiency improvements have been incorporated into their homes, which can be a valuable selling tool. [\[More\]](#)

Florida Water StarSM Now Offered Statewide

The St. Johns River Water Management District's residential water conservation program - Florida Water StarSM - is now offered statewide, bringing the economic and environmental benefits of water efficiency to homeowners in all of Florida's 67 counties.

The Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC), a nonprofit corporation that promotes sustainability, recently agreed to administer the program in the Suwannee River and Northwest Florida water management districts - the two remaining regions where Florida Water StarSM had not yet been available. The St. Johns River, South Florida and Southwest Florida water management districts administer the program within their respective boundaries. Be the first to get your project Florida Water StarSM certified in the Florida Panhandle and win a free project spotlight on the FGBC website. [\[More\]](#)

Photovoltaic Energy Valuation Tool Released

A new tool developed by Sandia National Laboratories and Solar Power Electric allows property owners to determine the value of a new or existing photovoltaic system installed on residential and commercial properties.

The tool provides appraisers, real estate agents and mortgage underwriters with more accurate values for PV systems. Licensed for solar PV installations, it can also be used for other large green features in a home that generate income, such as wind turbines.

Certification News

"Florida Green" Homes Certified

128 Homes so far in 2012
4,258 total as of
2/14/12

Local Governments

City of Largo

Certified: 12/22/11
Level: Silver
Points: 24

Education Opportunities

February 29, 2012

Local Government Clean Energy Forum

On-line webinar

[Register](#)

March 21-22, 2012

FGBC Certifying Agent Designation Course

Cocoa, FL

[\[Register\]](#)

March 22, 2012

FGBC Certifying Agent Annual Renewal Course

Pensacola, FL

[\[Register\]](#)

Calendar of Events

February 24, 2012

Water and Energy Conservation Expo

Deltona City Hall
Commission Chambers
Deltona, FL

[More Info](#)

February 27-29, 2012

RESNET Conference

Renaissance Austin Hotel
Austin, TX

[More](#)

February 28, 2012

National Invasive Species Awareness Week - Backyard Weed Seminar

Tallahassee Garden Club
507 N Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, FL

[More](#)

March 7-8, 2012

GreenPrints Conference

PV Value™, an electronic form to standardize appraisals, will provide consistent appraisals of homes and businesses outfitted with photovoltaic (PV) installations. Sandia National Laboratories and Solar Power Electric™ developed this tool to address a recurring challenge faced by the real estate industry. [\[More\]](#)

New Commercial Lighting Specs Released

The U.S. Energy Department recently announced new voluntary energy-saving specifications for lighting troffers - rectangular overhead fixtures used in commercial buildings - as well as parking lot and parking structure lighting. The new performance criteria were developed by the Department of Energy's Commercial Building Energy Alliances (CBEAs).

On average, over half of the lighting fixtures in commercial buildings operate for more than 10 hours a day and collectively consume more than 87 terawatt hours of electricity annually, which is equivalent to the energy used by nearly 3 million homes. These new commercial lighting specifications can reduce energy use by more than 40 percent compared with conventional lighting and have the potential to save businesses up to \$5 billion annually.

The new CBEA High Efficiency Troffer Specification provides minimum performance levels for LED and fluorescent troffers. The specification also includes an optional section on lighting controls, which can boost savings up to 75 percent by employing technologies such as motion sensors and timers.

DOE also released updated specifications for high-efficiency parking lot and parking structure lighting. [\[More\]](#)

KB Homes Includes Solar Panels as Standard Feature

Capitalizing on a federal renewable-energy tax credit, KB Homes expects to be the first production builder in Florida to include solar-energy panels as a standard feature on new houses in select communities. Recently it began installing them on the model home at the Apopka-area Fisher Plantation community, which has about 52 lots left and prices starting in the low \$200,000s.

Once installed, the base unit is expected to generate 1.4 kilowatts of power and shave about 30 percent off utility costs. KB Homes has estimated that a homeowner will save more than \$1,200 annually, compared with a typical resale home, in a solar-powered house with three bedrooms.

The base-model panels at the houses being built in Fisher Plantation retail for \$10,800 and buyers qualify for a 30-percent tax break, worth \$3,240, from the Residential Renewable Energy Tax Credit. [\[More\]](#)

Georgia Tech REsearch
Institute
Atlanta, GA
[Register](#)

March 10, 2012
**Marion County Master
Gardeners 18th Annual
Spring Festival**
2232 NE Jacksonville Rd
Ocala, FL
[More Info](#)

March 19-21, 2012
Power Up Energy Expo
Pensacola Beach, FL
[Register](#)

March 21-22, 2012
**FGBC Certifying Agent
Designation Course**
Cocoa, FL
[Register](#)

March 23, 2012
**Low Impact
Development (LID)
Expo**
Twin Lakes Park
Sarasota, FL
[More](#)

March 27-29, 2012
**Energy Efficiency
Global Forum**
Peabody Hotel
Orlando, FL
[More](#)

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Articles of Interest

Building Trends 2012
J. Walter Thompson Watch
List
*Electric fleets, fuel from
waste, rainwater harvesting,
solar make list*
[\[More\]](#)

Buildipedia Home Trends
[\[More\]](#)

**Earth Advantage
Predictions**
[\[More\]](#)

**U of F Researchers Advance
Solar Efficiency**
[\[More\]](#)

FGBC Committee

Incubator Program Recruits Solar Startups

DOE is accepting SunShot Incubator proposals from startup companies looking to introduce cost-reduction solutions to the solar energy market. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- *Photovoltaics
- *Concentrating Solar Power
- *Balance of Systems
- *Power Electronics
- *Tools to Reduce Non-Hardware Costs
- *Plug-and-Play Wiring and Installation Techniques
- *Energy Storage

As part of the SunShot Incubator program, this funding opportunity is designed to help small businesses and entrepreneurs develop both hardware technologies and non-hardware solutions that will make solar more accessible for Americans. [\[More\]](#)

PowerUp Energy Expo Set for March 17-21

Power Up Energy Expo connects energy industry experts, influential business leaders, policy makers, conservationists, and green building enthusiast, as they share innovative techniques to address the energy issues and advance the green building movement. Attendees will hear presentations and panel discussions across all energy sectors including wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, ocean, and bioenergy.

Our partner, Gulf Coast Energy Network, which sponsors PowerUp, is offering FGBC members a \$50 registration discount - mention code: "FGBC-POWER." [\[More\]](#)

The FGBC Certifying Agent Annual Verification class is being held on March 22 in conjunction with PowerUp and FGBC is hosting an exhibit booth during the conference, so join us for an FGBC networking event. [\[Course Registration\]](#)

TMDL Water Quality Restoration Grant Opportunity - Due March 1

Three times a year, funding is awarded for the implementation of best management practices designed to reduce pollutant loads to impaired waters from urban stormwater discharges. This funding is administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as the TMDL Water Quality Restoration Grant.

DEP is accepting applications for the TMDL water quality restoration grant program. The deadline for this project selection period is March 1, 2012. [\[More\]](#)

Florida's First Natural Gas Fueling Facility Breaks Ground

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-monthly
2 p.m.

GreenTrends

4th Tuesday-monthly
10 a.m. (New Time)

Hi-Rise Residential

3rd Tuesday-monthly
11 a.m.

Homes

2nd Tuesday-monthly
2 p.m.

Land Development

4th Wednesday-monthly
4 p.m.

Local Government

1st Tuesday-monthly
10:30 a.m.

Membership

Committee
3rd Thursday-monthly
1 p.m.

Programs & Promotions

3rd Thursday-monthly
1 p.m.

DOE Funding Programs

DOE has wide range of funding programs available for renewable energy projects that use solar, geothermal or wind.

The six-month countdown began February 7 for the opening of what will be the first compressed natural gas fueling facility of its kind in Florida, giving fleet owners and motorists yet another energy option for their vehicles. Flanked by shiny CNG-fueled school buses, Gov. Rick Scott joined Leon County School Superintendent Jackie Pons, Nopetro CEO Jorge Herrera, and local officials to kick off construction of the project, which is the result of a public-private partnership of Leon County Schools, Nopetro, and the City of Tallahassee Utilities.

Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam said the challenge in making greater use of alternative fuels is the infrastructure needed to make them available to users. "Trailblazers like this school district are building that bridge," he added.

Grant Targets Commercial Building Professionals

The U.S. Energy Department and the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program have announced up to \$1.3 million for training programs to provide commercial building professionals with critical skills needed to optimize building efficiency, reduce waste, and save money. Training will be tailored to building operators, building managers and energy service providers. [\[More\]](#)

Legislative News

Scott Signs State Water Quality Rules

Gov. Rick Scott signed HB 7051 this week, backing proposed state water quality rules that are intended to replace federal rules opposed by utilities, industry and agriculture groups.

The proposed state rules are being challenged by the Florida Wildlife Federation, the Sierra Club, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, the Environmental Confederation of Southwest Florida and the St. Johns Riverkeeper. They contend the rules are weak and unenforceable. A two-week hearing on their challenge is scheduled to begin Feb. 27 before the Division of Administrative Hearings.

HB 7051 waives a state law requirement that the proposed rules be ratified by the Legislature. The rules will go back to the Legislature for approval if major changes are made as a result of the legal challenge or the EPA review.

Oil Drilling Limited to Panhandle Area

SB 1158 seeks to encourage oil exploration and drilling on state lands. Its House counter bill (HB695) was amended this week to apply only to areas west of Tallahassee. HB 695 and SB 1158 would allow energy companies to enter into partnership agreements with state land management

Check out these websites for eligibility and details:

[Loan Programs](#)

[Geothermal](#)

[Solar](#)

[Wind & Water](#)

agencies to explore and drill for oil and gas. Drilling must be allowed in land management plans before an agreement can be presented to the Cabinet for approval.

Regional Planning Councils Targeted

SB 842 bans regional planning councils from both providing paid planning services for the cities and counties, and then reviewing their land-use changes.

Senator Bennett, who is Senate president pro-tem, said the councils are competing with planners in the private sector and also face a potential conflict of interest. "If they are going to contract for that work, then somebody other than their own agency should be reviewing that work," Bennet added.

Scott Koons, chair of the Florida Regional Councils Association's Executive Directors Advisory Committee, said state law already prohibits the councils from reviewing the work they do for local governments.

The bill also prohibits planning councils from accepting grants unless they can show it won't affect their core missions. Koons, who is executive director of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, said 85 percent of the budgets of regional planning councils come from grants. He noted that the \$2.5 million traditionally provided by the state for regional planning councils was vetoed last year by Gov. Rick Scott.

House Energy Bill Moving

Provided by Mike Rogers, Wilson Management, Tallahassee, FL

The House Finance and Tax Committee on Wednesday unanimously approved an energy bill that sponsor Scott Plakon, R-Longwood, described as a "modest step" toward bringing more renewable energy to Florida. The bill (HB 7117) includes tax exemptions and credits aimed at encouraging the development of renewable fuels and other types of renewable energy. Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam, who has been leading renewable-energy efforts, e-mailed a weekly newsletter last week that described the House bill and a similar Senate proposal as a "small jolt" for energy policy.

"The Florida Legislature has never been serious about renewable energy, or conservation for that matter, and pending bills in the House and Senate would only modestly advance the discussion," the Putnam newsletter said. "However weak, though, the legislation is a start in a tough political and economic climate." The House and Senate bills, however, include some significant differences. As an example, the House bill would move oversight of the state Office of Public Counsel --- which represents consumers in utility cases --- from the Legislature to the state Financial Services Commission. That commission is made up of Gov. Rick Scott and Cabinet members.

Florida Eligible for Beach Cleanup Funds from EPA

EPA is making almost \$10 million in grants available in 2012 to eligible coastal and Great Lakes states, territories and tribes to help them implement programs to monitor water quality at their beaches and to notify the public when water quality problems exist. Florida received the most funding at \$516,000. The grants will help local authorities monitor beach water quality and notify the public of conditions that may be unsafe for swimming. The Florida Department of Health offers a website that reports [water quality samplings](#) by county. [\[More\]](#)