# GREEN TODAY, FOR A GREEN TOMORROW

A QUARTERLY EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO ECO-FRIENDLY NEWS & INFORMATION



### January, 2009

## GO GREEN

A Message from Mayor Jerry Abramson



I am happy to send greetings for the first issue of your employee newsletter dedicated to your agency's green initiative. The Louisville Metro Housing Authority joins a wide range of businesses and government agencies that have come on board to participate in GO GREEN Louisville!

Going green is more than just a buzzword in our city. We're taking measurable steps to effect change not only by making improvements in city operations, but also by reaching out to people in the community. One of the first steps Metro government has undertaken is the construction of a green roof over the Metro Development Center. City engineers expect the new roof, which will include a variety of hardy vegetation and trees, will reduce energy costs and improve insulation.

LMHA has also begun planning for a green roof, and has several green initiatives underway including the "Kilowatt Crackdown" challenge. The challenge is designed to promote energy efficiency in commercial buildings. The information gathered through this process will be a useful tool as your agency moves forward in its efforts to improve energy efficiency at your sites located throughout the metro area.

There's a lot to do and many challenges ahead to achieve our collective goal. However, I firmly believe that together we can make a difference in the workplace, at home and in our respective neighborhoods by doing small things like recycling, carpooling, or participating in clean-up projects.

Congratulations on a great start---GO GREEN Louisville!

# go green louisvi‼e

In consideration of LMHA's GREEN initiative, **Green Today**, **For a Green Tomorrow** will be published on-line for all computer users (on a trial basis) beginning January, 2009 (www.Imha1.org "Pressroom" page). Please note that printed copies will continue to be made available to all employees who do not have regular access to a computer.

# LMHA IS LEADING THE GREEN WAY

Perhaps you have detected some of the "greening" projects underway at LMHA such as the energy efficient compact fluorescent light fixtures that brighten the Central Office hallway? Or maybe you've walked to the small break room to drop off some paper, aluminum and cardboard to be recycled? Have you noticed the new dispensers in the restrooms and break rooms that use 100% recycled content paper towels and green-labeled foaming soap? Maybe you've heard about the concentrated environmentally friendly cleaning products now in use at Avenue Plaza? These are just a few of the many greening efforts and policies currently being evaluated throughout the Agency.

While the Housing Authority has maintained a long standing commitment to energy efficiency, our efforts went to the next level when Louisville was chosen

by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in November 2007 as one of five US cities to become a model partner for its Energy Star program. Mayor Jerry



Abramson accepted the EPA's ENERGY STAR Challenge and rolled out his Go Green Louisville! campaign. LMHA quickly jumped on board for this initiative to adopt sustainable practices, including the goal to reduce energy use in the city by 10% or more by the year 2010.

## GREEN PACE-SETTER

In addition to the goals outline above, LMHA is tackling several large-scale environmentally beneficial projects. Of course, LMHA's premiere green site is Liberty Green, the HOPE VI revitalization project currently under construction on the former Clarksdale site. While the site's new name was drawn from the current and original name of the central roadway that runs through the six-block area (Liberty Street and Green Street) the name also aptly describes the community's cutting edge environmental standards. Liberty Green is the first mixed-income development in Kentucky to receive the EPA Energy Star Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing. Each and every homeownership and rental unit has been certified through the Energy Star program, and all appliances are also Energy Star rated. The Energy Star designation means that buildings are 30% more efficient than required by the 1993 National Model Energy Code. The EPA has indicated that Liberty Green units have been verified as 40% more efficient than homes built to that code, resulting in dramatic cost savings for those who lease or purchase homes.

# Saving Green By Becoming GREEN

Rising energy costs have made utility expenses a growing concern in overall housing affordability, as well as a significant portion of the LMHA's operating budget. The hundreds of thousands of dollars spent each month on utilities for the 4,034 units in LMHA's public housing inventory is expected to sharply increase with this winter's recent 24% increase in gas rates, and the proposed 5.5% increase for water. The Authority also incurs utility costs for units that are privately managed such as Park DuValle and Liberty Green and for those under lease in our Section 8 program. Once these factors are added in, our targeted 10% reduction in energy use could easily add up to over one million dollars in annual savings.

Beyond the monetary impacts to LMHA's budget are the environmental and health benefits to be reaped from our greening efforts, including cleaner air and water. LMHA intends to champion all these benefits and become a leader in the nation among affordable housing providers with the following broad goals:

- Developing, renovating and maintaining housing stock and communities with green materials and energy efficient technologies;
- Conserving energy and other natural resources; and,
- Increasing the awareness of environmentally responsible business and development practices.

Plans are also in the making for LMHA's first green roof at the Vine Street office building. Green roofs typically use a variety of low-maintenance and drought-resistant native plants such as sedums, a cold-hardy succulent with water storing leaves. These roofs help reduce storm water run-off while mitigating urban heat island effects and improving air quality.

LMHA has also worked with Youthbuild participants and the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) to install a rain garden at the St. Peter Claver Community Center on Lampton Street. Rain gardens are retention areas designed to absorb rainwater from impervious surfaces like roofs, walkways and parking lots. They are planted with native wetland vegetation that can reduce the rain runoff which causes erosion, water pollution and flooding. LMHA is looking at installing rain gardens at other sites and is currently testing pervious or permeable pavers as another rainwater management technique at Liberty Green. These pavers allow water to filtrate through the surface to underlying soils.

### INTRODUCING...

## LMHA LEAN GREEN ECO-TEAM MEMBERS

#### LMHA Staff

Tim Barry, Executive Director Teri Carr, Vine Street Alan Farley, Construction Admin. Steve Webb, Purchasing

#### **Board of Commissioners**

Cindy Adelberg Bryan Cole Rose Livingston

#### Advisors

Kathleen O'Neil Vikki Stone

### Taking it to the next level: Kilowatt Crackdown Competition

Due to the tremendous progress we made during 2008 with identifying and implementing energy efficient measures, LMHA will compete with 37 other Louisville building owners in the Kilowatt Crackdown, a contest launched by Mayor Jerry Abramson to show businesses how "going green saves green." LMHA entered Avenue Plaza in this year-long competition that begins January 1st. A total of 229 Metro area buildings are entered in the contest, including 150 Jefferson County School buildings. Prizes will be awarded for buildings showing the greatest improvement in energy efficiency, and those that have overcome unique obstacles and/or emphasized no-and low-cost practices. With the improvements planned for Avenue Plaza over the next few months and the commitment of each Central Office employee, we believe LMHA can be a winner!

## Working together to make a difference

Whether it's through large leaps in advanced technology or simple practices like turning off lights and office equipment, it will take a combination of practices that conserve energy and resources to accomplish our goals. It will also take creative thinking to address these concerns while continuing to maximize comfort and service levels for LMHA residents and employees. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please send them via email to vstone@lmha1.org. Your recommendations could become part of LMHA's official Green initiative or featured in upcoming newsletters.

Green Today, For a Green Tomorrow is a quarterly employee newsletter published by the Public Information Office (PIO) for LMHA. For more information contact Vikki Stone, PIO officer, (502) 569-3421 vstone@Imha1.org. Executive Director: Tim Barry; Deputy Executive Director – Operations: Will Seay; Deputy Executive Director – Finance: Wavid Wray; Website: www.LMHA1.org

## GREEN THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

-Margaret Mead

# Green Myths and Tips

Beginning with this issue, a new column entitled "Green Myths and Tips" will be featured in each newsletter. The column will cover common misconceptions and GREEN tips for home and at work.

**Myths** 

# Keeping your thermostat set at one temperature uses less energy.

According to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), you'd have to keep your home temperature four to six degrees cooler all the time for the savings to equal the recommended eight degree "setback" when you are at work or under the covers. With twice-daily, eight-degree, eight-hour setbacks, you can save 16-32% of your heating energy. Also, to protect your pipes from bursting be sure not to turn your heat completely off in freezing weather.

#### Tips

#### Keep the cold weather outside

The best way to help keep your heating costs down is to seal and caulk your windows and doors to make them airtight. Consider insulating your attic and the space where your heating equipment is located, and have insulation blown into any cold walls. The savings could be between 10-30% on your home heating bill.

Also, consider improving your current heating system. If the cost to repair your furnace is close to the purchase price for a new one, consider replacing it with a more efficient version. If you decide to keep your current system make sure it's in proper working order by having it cleaned and serviced, the ducts checked for leaks, and change or clean your air filters frequently.

Resource: National Geographic Green Guide, Winter 2009

# Seek and Find

LMHA is implementing many green initiatives to improve energy efficiency and the use of resources throughout its offices and properties. Our efforts are also reducing negative impacts to the environment. See how many practices, products, technologies and environmental concerns you can find in this puzzle.

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