

Green Building Update

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publication

Allen Matkins
attorneys at law

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IRS allocates \$406 million in clean renewable energy bonds

US Department of Energy - Feb 13

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service announced that it has allocated \$406 million in Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREBs) for a total of 312 renewable energy projects to be located throughout the United States. Unlike normal bonds that pay interest, CREBs are known as "tax-credit" bonds, and they pay the bondholders by providing a credit against their federal income tax. The new bond allocations range from \$15,000 to \$30 million and are set aside for 139 solar energy facilities, 102 wind power installations, 45 landfill gas facilities, 18 hydropower plants, 5 biomass power plants, and 3 trash combustion facilities.

Green Building Focus

[Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Energy \(DSIRE\) Web site](#)

Are you familiar with the latest rebate and grant programs on photovoltaics, energy efficiency and solar? The [Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Energy \(DSIRE\) Web site](#) has just released its January and February 2008 additions and updates. On average, about 60 programs are verified or revised monthly through contact with program administrators or other stakeholders throughout the U.S.

San Mateo County establishes green home requirement

Green Building Elements - Feb 15

San Mateo County recently voted to add sweeping green regulations to green construction requirements to take effect in late 2008. The new regulations will cover homes and industrial projects. The green commercial and industrial buildings can pass under the [LEED](#) system while residential properties can be gauged under Build it Green's "Green Point Rated" system. Green Point Rated, a residential, Green rating system created by the Berkeley-based non profit, uses various point categories to achieve certification. Homeowners can combine various point categories, as long as they add up to the 50 point total. Homeowners will have to pay a specialized green building inspector to verify their project for the county which will set them back about \$800 to \$1000, and for commercial owners it will cost from \$2500 to \$3500. Applicants will also be required to post a \$5,000 bond prior to receiving a building permit, which will be released when the 50 points are verified.

Hotels taking the LEED on green building

Petergreenberg.com - Feb 25

The U.S. Green Building Council said recently that "There are numerous hotels being reviewed by USGBC right now so the number of certifications will increase quickly". On the heels of an announcement by Marriott International that the company was increasing the number of its LEED

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architects from eight to 50. Glenn Hasek, publisher of GreenLodgingNews.com, an online publication for those in the hospitality industry, confirms that LEED has become the standard that hotel chains are pursuing. "It makes sense that these buildings will be better investments in the long-term" Hasek continued to say that "from budget motels to luxury high-rise hotels, we are seeing a tremendous change occurring in the hospitality market". USGBC went on to say that hotel owners and operators are increasingly using green building practices and seeking LEED certification because they, as the rest of the market has, realize it is fundamentally good business.

The big impact from greening small businesses

GreenBiz - Feb 25

Although large companies continually grab the headlines with far-reaching announcements about carbon reduction, recycling and eco-friendly products, small businesses have just as much ability to affect the environment, according to Greenbiz news. In the United States, small businesses (firms with less than 500 employees) employ half of the private sector workforce and use half of the electricity and natural gas consumed by the commercial and industrial sectors. While it's no groundbreaking revelation that everyone has to do their part to lessen their impact on the environment, the challenge lies in bringing the smaller players together and putting them all on the right track towards green building. Although there are other groups organized like BALLE - a nationwide organization that works with smaller local networks - there are other ways for green businesses to come together, including many other independent green business groups or sustainability programs developed by chambers of commerce.

NAHB develops new green building standard

New Jersey & Company - Feb 19

In what is referred to as "the first and only true consensus-based standard for residential green building" the National Association of Home Builders' (NAHB) new green building standard is expected to be approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and published by NAHB and the International Code Council (ICC) in early spring 2008. The National Green Building Standard is based on the three-year-old NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines, but enhanced to include residential remodeling, multifamily building, and lot and site development. The standard also requires builders to include features in seven categories: energy, water and resource efficiency; lot and site development; indoor environmental quality and homeowner education. It also adds the higher Emerald Level to the Bronze, Silver and Gold certification levels for the Guidelines.

Investor coalition pledges \$10 billion towards 'clean technology' over the next 2 years

EE Times Europe - Feb 18

A coalition of more than forty U.S. and European institutional investors, responsible for more than \$1.75 trillion in assets, have announced a commitment to invest in \$10 billion "clean technology" over the next two years. The investors said they would place green building standards at the core of future investment decisions. Other goals include a 20 percent reduction in the energy used in property investment holdings over the

coming three years. The plan, an attempt to use capital to address climate change, was unveiled at the Investor Summit on Climate Risk, hosted by the United Nations Foundation and the Ceres coalition in New York.

Saving the Earth Inside the Office: Discovery Turns Its Spotlight Inward

Washington Post - Feb 25

Larry Laque, an executive with [Silver Spring](#)-based [Discovery Communications](#), felt something amiss last year as his company began gearing up to announce a 24-hour television channel devoted to an all-green lifestyle. Discovery would be preaching environmental awareness around the clock on its Planet Green network, but Laque thought the company was not doing all it could do to recycle, conserve energy and pollute less.

British Columbia expected to raise \$1.8 billion from large greenhouse gas emitters

Vancouver Province - Feb 20

British Columbia has imposed a carbon tax on all fossil fuels, effective July 1 2008, which will raise \$1.8 billion in the next three years. "Every dollar raised will be returned to the people of B.C. in the form of lower taxes," said finance minister Carole Taylor. The \$37.7-billion budget includes \$1 billion for climate-change initiatives. Taylor said B.C. is signing on to a cap-and-trade system for large emitters of greenhouse gas. Hard targets for emissions will be set and emitters who go over that cap can buy extra emission credits from companies that don't use theirs. B.C. and Quebec are the only two Canadian provinces with a carbon tax. The U.K. and some European countries also tax emissions.

Notable green building projects...

[Harrah's \\$1 billion Caesars Palace addition being built to LEED standards](#)

Harrah's \$1 billion expansion of Caesars Palace, which includes a new 665-room hotel tower and 263,000-square-foot meeting and convention center, is pursuing LEED according to Eric Dominguez, Director of Energy and Environmental Services for Harrah's. The new Caesars Palace hotel addition will be constructed to LEED standards and is expected to be completed in early 2009.

[Chinese cities adopt low carbon initiative](#)

Chinese cities Shanghai and Baoding have joined a new WWF initiative promoting low carbon development in China's urban areas. The Low Carbon City Initiative will focus on increasing the energy efficiency of buildings, renewable energy and manufacturing more efficient products. WWF Asia Pacific Programme Director Isabelle Louis said "with a rapid economic development and increasing energy consumption, China is playing a crucial role in global efforts to reduce CO2 emissions".

[The Gas Company earns LEED gold certification](#)

Southern California Gas Co.'s (The Gas Company) efforts to renovate its operational facilities in the most energy-efficient and environmentally responsible way have earned the utility "Gold" certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program. The Gas Company completely

guttled and rebuilt the 29,000-square foot second floor of its major office space, all accessible hazardous materials were removed and replaced with environmentally friendly building systems and furnishings.

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