

Canton housing complex receives 'green' makeover

Lamplighter Village, a housing development in Canton off Route 138, recently underwent a full building overhaul as part of Peabody Properties' "LEAN on green" energy conservation campaign.

In 2012, Peabody Properties, a Braintree-based, full-service real estate firm, established a long-term relationship with the Low-income Energy Affordability Network (LEAN) and Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), organizations dedicated to reducing operational expenses for affordable housing properties. LEAN and ABCD help property owners and managers navigate incentive programs made available through numerous utility companies.

To date, 16 properties, including Lamplighter Village, have completed the application, audit and approval process and have received a full building overhaul, including new common area lighting and the installation of energy efficient appliances. As a result of this initiative, Peabody Properties projects an estimated 2.2 million kWh of electricity will be conserved annually, representing a savings of \$435,000.

According to Michael Ferguson, vice president of facilities and capital planning at Peabody Properties, a typical multi-family housing complex

has a multitude of spaces, including hallways, stairwells and common areas, which are often illuminated when not in use.

"Over the past several months we've made a concerted effort, with the help of LEAN and ABCD, to evaluate the energy used at our affordable housing properties," Ferguson said. "For example, we've found that in properties designed for seniors, stairwells have a 2 percent use rate, yet are illuminated 100 percent of the time. This is the type of data we're using to alter and improve some of our basic practices. These simple changes help make Peabody Properties a greener firm."

Upgrades include converting established lighting in common areas from fluorescent to LED technology, which uses approximately 60 percent less energy, and adding occupancy sensing devices to conserve additional energy in little used spaces. A new combination of 50,000 hour bulbs and LED converted exterior building and pole-mounted lighting conserves energy and lowers the costs of bulb replacement. Peabody Properties has also installed Energy Star rated refrigerators, said to use 50 percent less energy, in an effort to help residents reduce their carbon footprints and help lower electric bills.

