

Strategic Objective 4B: Green and Healthy Homes

Increase the health and safety of homes and embed comprehensive energy efficiency and healthy housing criteria across HUD programs.

OVERVIEW

HUD has committed to creating energy efficient, green, and healthy housing as part of a broader effort to foster the development of inclusive, sustainable communities. The residential sector is responsible for fully 21 percent of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions. HUD itself spends an estimated \$6.4 billion annually on utilities (both water and energy) in the form of allowances for tenant-paid utilities, direct operating grants for public housing, and housing assistance payments for privately-owned assisted housing. Utility costs account for around 22 percent of public housing operating budgets, and a similar share in the assisted housing sector.

Reducing these rising costs – generating savings for residents and owners, as well as for taxpayers – is a key HUD priority. Housing is also an important determinant of health, and poor housing conditions are associated with a wide range of health conditions, including respiratory infections, asthma, lead poisoning, injuries, and other housing-related health hazards. Significant progress has been made over the past four years with completed energy retrofits, healthy housing interventions, or new energy projects in more than 360,000 housing units.

From 2014-2018, HUD aims to continue to focus on energy and health investments in HUD-assisted housing, as well as in market-rate housing, to support the goals of President Obama's Climate Action Plan to cut energy waste in half by 2030 and accelerate clean energy leadership. We will reduce barriers to financing energy efficiency as well as on-site renewable energy, help unlock innovative and traditional sources of capital, and raise the bar on codes and standards that promote energy efficiency and healthy housing.

STRATEGIES

HUD's strategies to address this goal fall into three distinct related areas: strengthening energy efficiency and renewable energy, enhancing safe and healthy housing, and strengthening environmental reviews.

Boost Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

- **Strengthen HUD's programs and policies to meet the President's goal of cutting energy waste in half by 2030 in new and existing HUD-assisted housing.** This includes continuing to update energy codes and standards; implementing a green Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) in public housing and an analogous Capital Needs Assessment e-tool in multifamily housing; and supporting the adoption of comprehensive utility benchmarking protocols across HUD's portfolio. This strategy will help HUD stakeholders reduce energy consumption and improve building performance. This will be accomplished through voluntary efforts such as the Better Buildings Challenge, partnerships with DOE, EPA, USDA and other federal agencies, and leveraging HUD's Technical Assistance resources.

- **Implement national partnerships to triple the amount of on-site renewable energy across the federally assisted housing stock by 2020.** This joint effort of HUD, the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Treasury Department will for the first time focus on solar and renewable energy in federally-assisted housing, by implementing a key goal of the President's Climate Action Plan, to reach 100 megawatts – equivalent to the energy used by over 30,000 homes¹⁰ – of on-site renewable energy in federally assisted housing.
- **Overcome barriers to leveraging private sector and other innovative sources of capital for energy efficiency and renewable energy investments.** HUD, in concert with other federal and state partners, will help expand the pool of private and public capital investment for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs across the residential spectrum.

Enhance Safe and Healthy Housing

- **Expand housing management practices that protect the health of residents.**
- **Investigate HUD's existing methods to assess the physical condition of assisted housing for potential improvements in identifying defects shown to adversely impact health.** HUD's existing physical condition assessment methods focus on traditional physical safety hazards, which may miss certain recognized conditions that can result in health hazards. Consistent with the *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Healthy Homes*,¹¹ HUD's *Leading Our Nation to Healthier Homes: The Healthy Homes Strategic Plan*,¹² and the federal *Advancing Healthy Housing: A Strategy for Action*,¹³ HUD will conduct a review of existing physical condition assessment methods for potential improvements in identifying health hazards. This review will include HUD's physical condition assessment protocols, such as the Uniform Physical Condition Standards for Voucher Programs (UPCS-V).

Strengthen Environmental Reviews

- **Strengthen the environmental review process.** HUD will strengthen the environmental review process to require resilient projects by pursuing rulemaking to require flood mitigation in special flood hazard areas. Furthermore, HUD will ensure that building occupants are safe from hazards, such as radon, through clarification and enforcement of HUD's regulatory requirement that all projects are free of contaminants and hazards that could affect the health and safety of occupants. Finally, through continued support and emphasis on a thorough and complete environmental review, HUD will be supporting safe, sustainable projects that have a minimal negative impact on the environment.

¹⁰ <http://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/reports/2009/consumption-down.cfm?src=cr%20Consumption-f3>

¹¹ <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/healthyhomes/index.html>

¹² http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/library/hhi/hh_strategic_plan.pdf

¹³ http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/advhh

LEADING THIS OBJECTIVE

Trisha Miller, *Senior Advisor*, Office of Economic Resilience

Matthew Ammon, *Acting Director*, Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

To track our progress towards this objective, HUD will monitor the following performance indicator.

✧ Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Agency Priority Goal:

- ▶ **Number of HUD-assisted or -associated units completing energy efficient and healthy retrofits or new construction**

To assess our progress towards increasing the energy efficiency and health of the nation's housing stock, HUD tracks the number of new or retrofitted housing units that are healthy, energy-efficient, or meet green building standards. This measure tracks the number of retrofits and units of new construction meeting energy efficiency and/or healthy home standards.