

Advancing Energy Efficiency in Multifamily Buildings

Historically, residents in multifamily buildings have faced barriers to improving their homes. In many cases, buildings are not maintained, and retrofits are long overdue. To address this challenge, StopWaste is working with local partners to implement energy efficiency projects in multifamily properties that also improve resident comfort, safety and health.

StopWaste runs energy efficiency programs for multifamily housing in the Bay Area on behalf of the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN), a partnership between StopWaste, the Association of Bay Area Governments, and eight other county representatives in the Bay Area. Since 2013, BayREN has designed and administered regional energy efficiency programs with utility ratepayer funding. BayREN coordinates closely with East Bay Clean Energy and other community-choice aggregators in the region to advance the electrification of buildings.

Building Enhancements

The Bay Area Multifamily Building Enhancements program (BAMBE) offers cash rebates and free energy consulting for multifamily properties that undertake energy and water upgrades. The program assists in planning energy saving improvements designed to save 15% or more of a building's energy and water usage and provides \$750 per unit in rebates to help pay for upgrades. Higher incentives are available for upgrades that replace gas appliances with electric ones.

The integrated suite of services is designed to overcome barriers to energy efficiency retrofits in multifamily properties, focusing on thermal comfort (e.g. reducing drafts, maintaining consistent indoor temperatures), safety (lighting), and lower energy costs for both owners and renters. Since 2013, close to 600 properties throughout the Bay Area have completed \$80 million in energy upgrades and received nearly \$30 million in direct rebates. Participants are also estimated to save over \$30 million on utility bills over the next 10 years.

Indoor Air Quality Improvement Initiative

Building conditions can either improve or worsen the quality of the air inside our homes. Chronic health issues such as asthma can be exacerbated by issues like mold, moisture, pests, poor ventilation of gas-burning appliances, and leaky buildings that allow outside air into a home. The Alameda County Indoor Air Quality Improvement Initiative for Residents is a partnership between several local public agencies working



Local Governments Empowering Our Communities

The Bay Area Regional Energy Network is a coalition of the Bay Area's nine counties — a network of local governments partnering to promote resource efficiency at the regional level, focusing on energy, water and greenhouse gas reduction.



BayREN San Mateo County representative Andrea Chow and property manager Ken Cox at one of his family's Menlo Park apartment buildings. Thanks to no-cost energy consulting and rebates offered by the BAMBE program, tenants of two of Cox's Menlo Park apartment buildings now enjoy the comfort and quiet that comes with high performance windows and better roof and attic insulation.



Maintenance Manager Herb Featherstone at Cinnabar Commons apartment complex in San Jose displays the complex's new energy efficient condensing boilers put in place with support from the BAMBE program.

to improve indoor air quality for families that have children with asthma and low-income families living close to major sources of air pollution. Funding to make housing improvements a reality will help overcome the typical cost and technical barriers that often prevent energy efficiency and electrification upgrades that also have the potential to improve indoor air quality and reduce asthma triggers.

Electric Vehicle Charging Pilot Project

Funded by the Air District, this pilot project is designed to overcome barriers to installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in existing multifamily buildings. Outreach and technical assistance are being targeted to properties in areas disproportionately affected by poor air quality, designated by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District as AB 617 communities. The project will conclude with recommendations to the Air District for future incentive program design that can increase market adoption in the existing multifamily sector.

Evolving Into a New Era

Through years of experience and learning, our approach to work in the multifamily sector is evolving. This includes better incorporating equity principles into our work, such as exploring how to address smaller, older rental properties that have not previously participated in sustainability programs. The BayREN team will work collaboratively with public agency partners, community-based organizations, and activists from the Ashland and Cherryland communities of unincorporated Alameda County to discern and address the needs of the owners and residents of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), and will take what they find to inform BayREN program redesign.

Moving forward we are bringing together multiple internal projects in a more holistic way that focuses on the needs of multifamily property owners, simplifies how they interact with us, and highlights and connections between different sustainability focus areas. A team of staff is engaging multifamily property owners to help ground this effort in their needs and goals.