



HOUSING MINISTRIES OF AMERICAN BAPTIST IN WISCONSIN



Better Environmental Solutions

Baptist Housing Ministries Energy News

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Baptist Housing Ministries Plymouth Apartments Goes Solar--

Among first public housing complexes in the state to go solar

Milwaukee, WI— With leaders from Wisconsin and around the world gathering in Copenhagen to discuss climate change, the Housing Ministries of the American Baptist of Wisconsin Plymouth Apartments today became one of the first public housing complexes in the state to go solar as part of their Energy Independence and Jobs Plan. This plan includes upgrading Housing Ministry properties to save taxpayers and residents money, create jobs, and reduce global warming and other pollutants.

“This solar hot water project was supported by the Milwaukee Shines Project for a site assessment, and we were happy to help make this a success,” said Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett. “Milwaukee Shines shows how Wisconsin can be a leader in solar energy production and solar energy jobs. We want to expand this program to capture all of the solar and green jobs that we can in Wisconsin.”

The \$103,000 project with 16 solar thermal panels heat hot water for the building heating and hot water systems starting at 51 degrees to over 80 degrees and saves 1,666 therms of natural gas each year, reducing CO2 emissions by 18,260 pounds a year. The apartments are also installing more efficient boilers, energy efficient lighting and water conservation, like low flow shower and sink heads and looking at other energy measures.

“As people of faith, we have the responsibility to protect our planet and the future. As public housing providers, we have the responsibility to save taxpayers money, and this solar energy project accomplishes both,” said Reverend Carmen Porco, Executive Director of the Housing Ministries of the American Baptists of Wisconsin. “We thank the governor, mayor, WE Energies and Focus on Energy for working with us to green up our housing facility.”

MORE

Baptist Housing Ministries Goes Solar
Page Two, December 14th, 2009

WE Energies provided \$25,000 in incentives. "We Energies is pleased to financially assist this multi-family solar thermal project through its non-profit renewable energy grant program," said Connie Lindholm, We Energies Non-Profit Grant Program Manager. We appreciate the growing interest in our programs."

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development supports the project through its low income senior housing program. "This is an example of how HUD wants to go green and modernize our public housing across America," said Joseph Thibedeau, HUD official title. "We applaud the Baptist Housing Ministries and want all our managers to save energy, reduce greenhouse air pollution, and save taxpayers money in energy bills."

Focus on Energy provided incentives and an energy assessment of the property that led to this installation.

"Focus on Energy is happy to work with the Housing Ministries of the American Baptists of Wisconsin and other housing providers to promote green energy and savings at their apartments," said Immanuel Mills, Focus on Energy Site Assessor. "Investing in green energy and more efficiency are cost effective ways to reduce our energy dependence and costs."

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, multifamily housing units are an intensive major energy consumer in the commercial sector and have great potential for energy savings and renewable energy.

"The Housing Ministries solar project shows that going green is the right thing to do for our environment and our bottom line, which makes great business sense for apartment owners in these tough economic times," said Brett Hulsey, President of Better Environmental Solutions, who created the Energy Independence and Jobs Program for the Housing Ministries.

The project employed union workers from by H and H Solar. "H and H Solar is happy to provide the solar installation with good union jobs and American made products," said Shawn Young, Renewable Energy Specialist for H and H Solar.

"The Sierra Club applauds the Baptist Housing Ministries and Mayor Barrett's commitment to increase solar energy production to reduce our need for more fuel imports and more pollution," said Rosemary Wehnes, Sierra Club Associate Representative. "Solar thermal is an economically feasible way of optimizing energy performance of housing units, thus reducing energy costs for residents. This is a win-win strategy that will save on utility bills, create green jobs, and reduce greenhouse and other air pollutants."

For more on what you can do to promote energy efficiency and solar energy, go to www.FocusonEnergy.Com. For more information on the Energy Efficiency and Jobs Project, email Brett@BetterEnviro.Com or call 608-238-6070.

***The Housing Ministries of the American Baptists of Wisconsin** operates 811 affordable housing units in Madison and Milwaukee and provides homes, education, community and training for residents.*

***Better Environmental Solutions** is an award-winning energy and environmental consulting firm with over 30 years experience working to implement practical, cost-effective solutions like the Energy Independence and Jobs Program that save lives, jobs and money. For more information, go to www.BetterEnviro.Com.*

