



## N E W S R E L E A S E

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### **\$2.46 Million Sustainability Retrofit Begins at LINC Housing's Low-Income Apartment Community in Lancaster *First Affordable Housing Multifamily Near-Zero Net Energy Retrofit in California to Serve as Model***

LANCASTER, Calif., Sept. 29, 2014 - Work has started on the first near-zero net energy affordable multifamily retrofit in California. The \$2.46 million sustainability retrofit project aims to bring energy inefficient, multifamily housing units at The Village at Beechwood (Lancaster, Calif.) to as near-zero net energy as possible, becoming a model for lowering energy and water costs for similar affordable housing communities nationwide.

"This work is important because we need to find a way to make multifamily housing more efficient," said Samara Larson, director of sustainability for LINC Housing and SEED Partners. "To date, there isn't clear data on how sustainability retrofits can be cost-effective, while reducing utility costs for owners and residents. This research project will give us that data so we can show the positive impact on costs and the environment."

The work is funded by the California Energy Commission's (CEC) Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) Program's "Building Energy Efficiency Research and Technology Grant Program" and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Energy Innovation Fund. The PIER program is the state's premier energy RD&D program, advancing science and technology in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energy, advanced electricity technologies, energy-related environmental protection, as well as transmission, distribution, and transportation technologies. Southern California Gas Company envisioned this project back in 2012 and remains a key project partner.

LINC Housing and its wholly owned energy and water services company, SEED Partners, is working with project leader Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), as well as BIRAenergy, CEC, HUD, Southern California Edison, and Southern California Gas Company.

"EPRI is pleased to participate in this project that will bring lower energy costs to residents in affordable housing at Beechwood and to the larger community," said Ram Narayanamurthy, principal project leader at EPRI. "It enables us to apply our knowledge of energy efficiency to a real-world environment and is well aligned with our public benefit mission."

The Village at Beechwood is a 100-unit family community owned by LINC Housing. LINC's SEED Partners is developing scalable and replicable retrofit packages for individual apartments. To date, two apartments have been completed, and testing of specific measures resulted in air leakage reductions of 70 percent, which will save on heating and cooling costs. These findings will be incorporated into the measures for all 30 units that are part of the research project. All 100 homes in the complex will benefit from energy efficiency improvements to reduce electricity, gas and water costs.

Retrofit packages include new insulation, ENERGY STAR kitchen appliances, and efficient lighting. SEED expects gas usage to be reduced by 45 percent, electricity use to be reduced by 33 percent, and irrigation water to be reduced by 21 percent. Energy use will be offset by an on-site solar photovoltaic system producing 145,000 kWh per year, and a solar domestic hot water system generating the equivalent of 4,300 therms of natural gas per year. SEED will also install an efficient boiler and smart irrigation controllers with new sprinkler heads.

Work on the project site began at the end of September, and will continue over the next year. The team will monitor performance and energy savings through 2016, providing key data to the CEC and other agencies to support replicating this near-zero net energy approach in other locations.

#### About LINC Housing Corporation

LINC Housing, one of California's most productive nonprofit developers of affordable housing, has helped create more than 7,500 homes in 73 communities throughout the state. The organization's properties are known for excellent design, outstanding management and life-enhancing services for its residents. LINC has more than 30 years of service to families, seniors, and local governments helping to create sustainable communities via new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation, and historic preservation. Visit [www.linchousing.org](http://www.linchousing.org) for more information.

#### About SEED Partners, LLC

SEED brings sustainability to existing affordable multi-family housing communities throughout the country. SEED has performed sustainable retrofits of LINC's expanding portfolio and is available to help other owners retrofit their properties as well. Each property will become more energy efficient, and support a "quadruple bottom line" that reduces owner and resident utility costs, creates healthier living conditions, saves building owners money on operations, and benefits the environment by reducing each building's carbon footprint. Services include: energy audits/modeling; payback and life cycle cost analysis for improvements; project and construction management; measurement and verification; operations and maintenance training; and resident engagement programs. Visit [www.seedpartners.org](http://www.seedpartners.org) for more information.

#### About EPRI

The Electric Power Research Institute, Inc. conducts research, development and demonstration (RD&D) relating to the generation, delivery and use of electricity for the benefit of the public. An independent, nonprofit organization, EPRI brings together scientists and engineers as well as experts from academia and the industry to help address challenges in electricity. EPRI's work spans nearly every area of electricity generation, delivery and use, management and environmental responsibility. EPRI provides both short- and long-term solutions in these research areas for the electricity industry, its customers and society. Visit [www.epri.com](http://www.epri.com) for more information.