



The Athens Messenger

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Project under way to reduce energy waste in off-campus housing

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A foundation has awarded \$50,000 to a project aimed at reducing energy waste at Ohio University student off-campus housing.

The money is coming from the recently established Sugar Bush Foundation.

The Green House Project, developed and supported by the OU Office of Sustainability and the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development, will provide for energy-efficiency audits of off-campus housing and dissemination of information, recommendations and financial support to students and landlords interested in making related improvements, according to a news release from OU.

"We project that participating units will generate an annual savings of up to \$621 per house, the equivalent of approximately 6.9 tons of greenhouse gas emissions avoided per house per year," said OU Sustainability Coordinator Sonia Marcus.

Work on the project is under way, and the first public information sessions for students and landlords will take place spring quarter.

The project will include:

- Whole-house audits performed to evaluate energy leaks, the efficiency of appliances and residents' patterns of energy usage.
- Recommendations for improving the overall efficiency of the rental and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Education on topics such as how to cut utility bills, the connection between energy use and climate change and what to look for when choosing a rental in Athens.
- Distribution of compact fluorescent light bulbs and high-efficiency shower heads to students free of charge.
- Cash rebates for participating landlords.

This marks the first grant awarded by the Sugar Bush Foundation, a private family foundation whose mission is to work with Ohio University and communities to improve the quality of life in Appalachian Ohio by fostering sustainable development.

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