

Energy-saving program taking apps

April 28, 2008

The Green House Project is now accepting applications from students and landlords interested in improving the efficiency of off-campus living rental units in the city of Athens. Public information sessions and cookouts will be held throughout spring quarter to promote participation in this pilot project, according to a press release.

The Green House Project, developed and supported by the Ohio University Office of Sustainability and the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development, will provide for energy-efficiency audits of off-campus housing units, and the dissemination of information, recommendations and financial support to students and landlords interested in making related improvements. The project is funded by the Sugar Bush Foundation.

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

The Green House Project will serve a number of related goals, including offsetting the university’s carbon footprint as mandated by the Presidents’ Climate Commitment and reducing Athens’ greenhouse-gas emissions as directed by the Cool Cities Initiative, the release reported.

Participating units will get:

- Whole-house audits performed to evaluate energy leaks, the efficiency of appliances, and residents’ patterns of energy usage.
- Peer-to-peer 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 showerheads to students.
- Receipt of a report detailing the results of each audit, which will be accompanied by a list of recommended actions (such as addition or replacement of insulation, replacement of furnace, application of weather stripping) to improve the overall efficiency of the rental and to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.
- Cash rebates of up to \$500 for landlords who choose to make recommended upgrades.
- Promotional campaign for participating properties.

Two information sessions for landlords will be held at the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce: 5-6 p.m. Monday, May 19; and 12-1 p.m. Wednesday, May 21.

Cookouts for student tenants will be held both on and off campus. All cookouts take place from 4-6 p.m.: Sunday, May 4, West Green, Stocker Center lawn; Wednesday, May 7, Mill Street entrance from Seigfred Hall parking lot; Saturday, May 10, Lamborn’s Studio and Custom Framing parking lot, corner of West State Street and North Congress Street; Sunday, May 11, South Green, Front Four lawn; Saturday, May 24, ARTS/West, 132 W. State St.; Sunday, June 1, East Green, lawn between Bush and Washington halls.

For more information about the project or to pre-register for an information session for landlords, visit www.ohio.edu/GreenHouseProject/ or e-mail greenhouseproject@ohio.edu.