

# Energy Efficiency Standards for the City of Portland

November 2007

**November 8, 2007** In a bold move to curb the growth of greenhouse gas emissions from the Portland area, city officials plan to charge builders hundreds of dollars for each new home that is not extremely energy efficient. And it would require, as part of every existing home sale that an energy efficiency report be done by home inspectors.

Believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, the carbon fee and inspection requirement would levy taxes upon builders who merely comply with the energy efficiency requirements of the Oregon building code, already one of the most stringent in the nation. It would then pay cash rewards to developers who make buildings that save at least 45 percent more energy than the code requires.

The plan will go before Portland residents, in hearings, in January. With passage, the carbon-fee rules would be in place by 2010.

## Standards for Energy Efficiency

For existing homes and commercial buildings:

- Upon property sale, seller must disclose results of an energy performance rating.
- Performance rating could reveal inadequate insulation and show efficiency levels of furnaces, water heaters, air conditioners and windows.
- Home inspectors and commercial building inspectors could produce the ratings, potentially for about the same price of a home inspection.
- City would collect data for analysis of region's greenhouse gas production.

For new homes, offices, retail centers and multifamily housing:

- Builders would be charged a fee if construction meets Oregon building code for energy efficiency.
- Builders could avoid fee by producing a building 30 percent more energy efficient than code requires.
- Builders could get cash back from the city for making a building at least 45 percent more efficient than code.
- City would pay for builder training in the next two years, before implementation. Then, fees would cover most implementation costs. For new offices, retail centers and multifamily housing:
- City would require buildings to be commissioned, a formal inspection of heating, cooling and other systems to ensure building operates as efficiently as designed.

Source: Office of Sustainable Development, city of Portland