

City of Dallas News Release

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City of Dallas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 9, 2008



“Green” Is New Building Standard In Dallas

City Council passes new construction requirement to reduce environmental impact; Dallas becomes one of the first major U.S. cities to pass comprehensive building standard for both residential and commercial construction

DALLAS, TX— The Dallas City Council today unanimously adopted a green construction ordinance which aims to reduce energy and water consumption in all new houses and commercial buildings constructed in the city. This step adds to the City’s record of being an environmental leader.

“We’re at the lead of the major cities in this country. We had industry come in and really embrace it. We crafted it to make sense for everybody,” said Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert.

While the City of Dallas has had a Green Building standard for its own city-owned buildings, which requires all buildings over 10,000 square feet to be built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standards, a standard did not exist for private development. A Green Building Task Force, comprised of members of the residential and commercial development sectors, was created to develop recommendations for the new standards for all new private development in Dallas. The task force’s recommendations were brought to the City Council in March for consideration; a formal vote was taken today.

“We support the efforts to create a better-built environment and accept the responsibility that every industry, and now every home, must share to help the region reach its air quality goals,” said Donny Mack, president of the Home Builders Association of Greater Dallas.

“It is important to recognize the work of the Green Building Task Force and the support of the local building industry. This ordinance is the result of the commitment of not only our city leaders, but our business leaders who share in our commitment to environmental responsibility,” said Zaida Basora, Assistant Director of Public Works.

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Highlights of the ordinance:

The ordinance will be implemented in two phases. The first phase, starting in 2009, requires that homebuilders construct their homes to be 15 percent more efficient than the base energy code and meet four out of six high-efficiency water reduction strategies. In phase 2, beginning in 2011, it requires all homes to be built to either the LEED standard or the Green Built North Texas (GBNT) standard and include points toward a 20 percent water use reduction and a minimum 17.5 percent more efficient than the base energy code or the performance of an ENERGY STAR for homes with a HERS rating of 83 or less.

For commercial projects, Phase 1 of the new ordinance requires buildings *less than* 50,000 square feet to be 15 percent more efficient than the base energy code, use 20 percent less water than required by the current Dallas Plumbing Code, all roof surfaces with a slope of 2:12 inches or less must meet the EPA's ENERGY STAR low-slope roof requirements; and meet outdoor lighting restrictions, except for safety and security reasons as applicable.

For commercial projects *over* 50,000 square feet, phase 1 requires buildings to meet 85 percent of the points required under the appropriate LEED rating system for a certified level, including one point for 20 percent water use reduction, and a minimum two points for 14 percent more efficient than the base energy code.

Phase 2, beginning in 2011, requires all commercial projects to be LEED certifiable under the appropriate LEED rating system, including one point for 20 percent water use reduction, and a minimum three points for 17.5 percent more efficient than the base energy code.

ABOUT GREEN DALLAS

The City of Dallas' Green Dallas initiative is aimed at environmental responsibility and encourages both public and private sector involvement. The City of Dallas is the number one municipal purchaser of renewable green power in the United States. Dallas boasts the largest clean vehicle fleet of any city in Texas and one of the largest in the nation. The City of Dallas is the only city chosen as a pilot city for the EPA's Sustainable Skylines Initiative aimed at improving air quality. To find out more about how the City of Dallas is an environmental leader and what residents can do to 'build a greener Dallas,' visit the City's green Web site www.GreenDallas.net .

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