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2640 Fountain View Drive ■ Houston, Texas 77057 ■ 713.260.0500 P ■ 713.260.0547 TTY ■ www.housingforhouston.com

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Contact:

G. Ashley Johnson
Communications Coordinator
gjohnson2@housingforhouston.com
713-260-0774

HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMITS TO AGENCY-WIDE ENERGY EFFICIENCY

HOUSTON – The Houston Housing Authority (HHA) has taken progressive steps to improve the agency’s energy conservation measures across its public housing communities and the agency as a whole. By taking advantage of federal initiatives, partnering with private companies and local energy providers, the HHA has undertaken a number of projects with an end goal of recouping millions of dollars in costs of energy and utilities.

Participation in U.S. Departments of Energy (DOE) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) national initiative

In response to DOE and HUD’s expansion of its ‘Better Buildings Challenge’ to multifamily housing, the HHA has committed to seeking energy efficient technologies to reduce energy consumption by 20 percent over 10 years. One facet of this effort will be implemented at the HHA’s Historic Oaks of Allen Parkway Village (HOAPV) community, where plans are to install new LED technology lighting to its buildings and parking lot/common areas. The interior of HOAPV units will receive upgrades with LED lighting, water heaters and fixtures. In addition, high efficiency HVAC equipment will be installed to improve the air quality and savings to the residents. The overall rehab project should result in a 57 percent reduction in energy usage across the property – an annual savings of over \$125,000.

Improvements to promote conservation and maintenance / Working with Siemens

In a contractual partnership developed with the engineering and energy company Siemens, the HHA has taken steps to develop and finance installation projects designed to improve energy efficiency and maintenance costs across its facilities. The resulting report has enabled rehab designs to be prepared and financed, with a total of \$25 million dollars in capital improvements projected to save \$1.7 million in annual utility costs.

‘100% Green’ – Renewable Energy Purchase from Reliant

HHA performed an extensive search in early 2015 for the purchase of full renewable energy resources for use across its entire portfolio of properties. In April, the HHA selected Reliant Energy for a 3-year contract providing 100-percent wind energy. Projections of the savings to the HHA are valued at just over \$200,000 per year over the life of the contract.

Installation of Energy Savings Devices / CenterPoint Energy Low-Rise Multifamily Program

Through negotiations with CenterPoint Energy, the agency was selected as a pilot for an effort to outfit affordable housing units according to the program's energy efficient requirements. In its initial phase, energy efficient devices will be installed in all 234 units at the HHA's Villas at Winkler property. Improvements being made include the following:

- Replacement of all light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamp bulbs;
- Installation of water conservation shower heads and sink aerators in bathrooms and kitchens;
- Insulation of water heaters and water pipes.

"Like many people who take personal steps everyday to be more energy-conscious, our agency feels it should do the same with our assets," says HHA President and CEO Tory Gunsolley. "Energy efficiency is about more than just the economic benefits – it better the lives of the people we serve, improves the environment we share, and it's just the right thing to do."

It is the HHA's position that these energy efficiency efforts will serve as cornerstones to provide greater resources to its residents and as an example to other public housing agencies of responsible stewardship and commitment to the communities when the agency serves.

ABOUT HHA:

The Houston Housing Authority provides affordable homes and services to more than 58,000 low-income Houstonians, including over 17,000 families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program and another 5,700 living in 25 public housing and tax credit developments around the city. HHA also administers one of the nation's largest voucher program exclusively serving homeless veterans. More information about the Houston Housing Authority can be found at www.housingforhouston.com.

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