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Chestnut Hill Realty teams with employees and residents to Live Green

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For more than 35 years, Chestnut Hill Realty has been committed to responsible development and management, including conserving energy. With the launch of its Live Green program last year, CHR moved to the forefront among local companies committed to greening their operations. The program not only sets goals for conservation, including major reductions in BTU usage, but it also influences a move toward green living on the part of both CHR residents and employees.

Bobby Zuker, CHR's chief operating officer explains, "conserving energy is not only a good business decision, it is essential to preserving our environment for future generations. We are making great strides through Live Green. We are ahead of schedule in reducing BTUs, already achieving 7% of the 11% reduction we hoped to achieve by 2011. We are also reducing the volume of water and electricity used and increasing recycling."

"As important", Zuker continues, "are the ways in which we are encouraging our residents and employees to think and act green. With nearly 10,000 residents, in addition to our employees, the opportunities are significant. It is this aspect of Live Green that truly sets CHR apart."

Residents and employees were introduced to the comprehensive plan last spring when they received reusable grocery bags filled with information on how to reduce, recycle and reuse within their own homes. Throughout the year, CHR hosts contests and events at various communities to encourage additional awareness of recycling, energy conservation and water consumption with impressive results. An educational webpage on CHR's website provides energy saving links and tips, and new residents receive a green move-in gift that includes, among other things, two CFL light bulbs.

We feel strongly that education and awareness effect change," Zuker emphasizes, "and that's what we want to promote from the first day someone moves into a CHR community."

Similarly, CHR employees have access to a purchasing program that provides discounts on CFL light bulbs and programmable thermostats. Walking the talk, CHR also offers incentives to employees who use public transportation, car pool, bike or walk to work. Cash rebates are also available to employees and residents who purchase EPA Smartway Elite vehicles. The CHR courier car is a Prius.

CHR's Live Green program was developed by a committee of employees from many different parts of the company. This diverse committee is shepherding green planning in virtually every area of CHR's operations.

In its corporate offices and residential communities CHR is reducing its consumption of energy through the tightening of building envelopes, the replacement of older, inefficient boilers and hot water heaters with higher efficiency models, and the installation of Energy Star appliances. The installation of 1,700 programmable thermostats at several properties alone resulted in a 13%

decrease in energy use.

Water consumption is down by 40% as the result of water-saving devices including toilets, shower heads and faucets. Electricity usage is being reduced through efforts such as replacing incandescent bulbs with fluorescent lights, and installing high efficiency motors and fans for pump houses and boiler rooms.

Construction materials, inefficient appliances, lighting, and all plastic, glass and paper are being recycled. Flat screen monitors have been installed and all copiers now offer duplexing and scanning abilities, reducing paper use. Toner cartridges are sent back to the manufacturer for re-use. Overall, recycling has increased by 53%.

In CHR's landscaping division, noisy equipment, such as leaf blowers, have been replaced with fuel efficient and noise reducing models. Smart irrigation systems have reduced water usage by almost 70%. Drought resistant and site appropriate plantings, along with eco-friendly pest control systems, have also been implemented.

"We are proud of our accomplishments to date." Zuker sums up, "We know that we have a long way to go and are constantly challenging ourselves to come up with new ways to improve our properties and engage our residents and employees."

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