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Peabody Properties goes LEAN on green

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Peabody Properties, Inc. plans to take its energy conservation commitment to the next level by going “LEAN on green.” In 2012, Peabody Props. established a long-term relationship with the Low-income Energy Affordability Network (LEAN) and Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), organizations dedicated to reducing operational expenses for affordable housing properties. LEAN and ABCD help the owners and managers of affordable housing properties navigate incentive programs made available through numerous utility companies. To date, 16 properties have completed the application, audit and approval process and have received a full building overhaul including common area lighting and the installation of energy efficient appliances. As a result of this initiative, Peabody Properties projects an estimated 2,200,000 kWh of electricity will be conserved annually, representing a savings of \$435,000. With 10 additional properties in the audit pipeline and more than 20 in the application phase, the Peabody Properties’ conservation campaign is off to a strong start in 2013. According to Michael Ferguson, vice president of facilities and capital planning at Peabody Props., a typical multi-family housing complex has a multitude of spaces, including hallways, stairwells and common areas, which are often illuminated when not in use. “Over the past several months we’ve made a concerted effort – with the help of LEAN and ABCD –to evaluate the energy used at our affordable housing properties. For example, we’ve found that in properties designed for seniors, stairwells have a 2% use rate, yet are illuminated 100% of the time,” said Ferguson. “This is the type of data we’re using to alter and improve some of our basic practices. These simple changes help make Peabody Properties a greener firm.” Upgrades include converting established lighting in common areas from fluorescent to LED technology, which uses approximately 60% less energy, and adding occupancy sensing devices to conserve additional energy in little used spaces. A new combination of 50,000 hour bulbs and LED converted exterior building and pole-mounted lighting, conserves energy and lowers the costs of bulb replacement. Peabody Props. has also installed Energy Star rated refrigerators, said to use 50% less energy, in an effort to help residents reduce their carbon footprints and help lower electric bills. Properties that have already completed the LEAN application, audit and approval process include Capitol Square in Arlington; Bedford Towers and Melville Towers in New Bedford; Victory Gardens in Boston; Seton Manor in Brighton; Lamplighter Village in Canton; Chelsea Village Apartments in Chelsea; Adams Templeton Place and Kelly House in Dorchester; Fairhaven Village in Fairhaven; Angela Westover House, Nate Smith House, and Pondview Apartments in Jamaica Plain; Humbolt Apartments and Van Ness Terrace in Roxbury; and, Mt. Pleasant Apartments in Somerville.

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