



April 30, 2008

Cathedral City going green but not mean

*Staff
The Desert Sun*

Asking, not forcing, developers to build green is a good first step toward meeting and exceeding state energy-efficiency standards for Cathedral City.

It's also a good opportunity for builders to promote their "green" efforts.

The Cathedral City Council last week unanimously passed the Green Building Ordinance, a program encouraging builders to use energy-efficiency techniques when building in the city.

It's a win-win situation all around. The city stands to exceed energy efficiency standards by at least 15 percent above and beyond state standards. Residents will enjoy a cleaner and more abundant environment, buyers of such homes could see savings and, as we said, developers will look good because they are doing the right thing.

Under the city's Green Building program, home builders agree to have their plans reviewed and their homes inspected by officials from the California Green Builder Program, which calls for energy efficient heating and air-conditioning, windows, drought-resistant landscaping and recycling of construction debris.

Energy efficiency building saves energy, especially in the hot summer months and saves on water, a precious resource here in the desert.

Cathedral City joins a number of communities that have passed "green" ordinances. In Indio, 174 energy-efficient homes in the Plantation at Polo development are expected to save 3.5 million gallons of water and about 323,000 pounds of carbon dioxide each year, for example. Another development in La Quinta is saving low-income renters about \$720 in utility bills. Palm Desert has an aggressive program to save energy and has, in fact, helped form legislation to help residents pay for improvements within their property tax bills.

Homeowners don't have to buy into new developments to gain similar savings. Most cities offer programs on how to make existing homes more energy efficient. Property owners should check with their city governments to determine what programs, or advice is available. Conservation ensures everyone wins.
