



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

A project of Generation Green - a 501(c)3 Non profit organization
Find Links to Other Local Government Policy Opportunities at

Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO)

WHAT? A RECO ordinance requires energy efficiency upgrades to be installed in a house at the time of sale or at the time of a major remodel. Compliance with RECO measures saves money in energy savings and reduces the amount of GHG emissions in each home. A RECO ordinance will greatly influence the reduction of city GHG emissions.

WHY? Buildings have a long lifespan. The initial technology installed in a house is often outdated by the time an owner sells the building. By implementing a RECO, these energy upgrades are implemented when owners are already undergoing property inspections and improvements associated with the sale or remodel.

- More than two-thirds of CA's residential buildings were built before 1982 and so therefore did not have energy performance requirements from the CEC.
- With continual upgrades in the state's energy standards since 1978, even houses built in 1990 lack some of the most cost-effective efficiency measures.
- The number of existing homes sold each year is triple the number of new homes that are built.

By improving the existing building stock, GHG emissions can be greatly reduced in a building sector that would otherwise remain relatively stagnant.

WHO? Cities and counties have ordinances that require energy efficiency improvements to buildings at the time of sale. Local governments define what classifies as a major remodel to ensure updates at that time also. Utilities sometimes partner with local governments to expand the use of these local energy conservation ordinances as part of the 2006-08 energy efficiency programs.

- San Francisco
http://www.sfdbi.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/dbi/Key_Information/ResidentialEnergyConservationOrdinance.pdf
- Berkeley <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=16030>
- Austin, TX
<http://www.austinenergy.com/About%20Us/Environmental%20Initiatives/ordinance/index.htm>

HOW? The following resources will be useful:

- CA Home Energy Rating Services (HERS) www.energy.ca.gov/HERS
- Energy Checkup www.energycheckup.com
- Description, calculations, cost-effective analysis, barriers to implementation and more
http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/submittals/electricity/nrdc_time_of_sale_ee_final.pdf
- San Fran Costs, Benefits, Reductions and Savings from an upgraded RECO
http://www.spur.org/publications/library/report/critical_cooling/option2
- Presentation on Berkeley's Current and possible future RECO alterations
<http://www.ecoleader.org/assets/downloads/RECO/Berkeley%20RECO%20for%20Sonoma%20County.pdf>
- Draft Ordinance from Boulder, CO
http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/files/Environmental%20Affairs/CAPAG/reco_report_boulder.pdf

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