Bringing Sustainability Home

Driving the sustainable building practices that ensure equal access to environmental and health benefits for residents of affordable housing communities

Bringing Sustainability Home is a leading national initiative that uniquely deploys the scale, focus, and real-world solutions of the Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) member network and its partners to create more sustainable, healthy homes for residents. Affordable housing providers, inside and outside the SAHF network, are both encouraged and motivated—through demonstrations of feasibility, savings, and impact—to adopt sustainable and healthy building practices.

What We Do

Bringing Sustainability Home provides practical resources, tools, and step-by-step guides that make it easier for affordable housing practitioners to adopt environmentally sustainable practices. In this space, affordable housing practitioners share learnings and best practices from their on-the-ground experience with green building programs and healthy building strategies. This includes resilient building strategies in response to climate change that directly impact the operations of these communities and the lives of its residents. We partner with key organizations—including Energy Efficiency for All and the Healthy Building Network—to create opportunities for the energy, affordable housing, and health industries to collaborate to ensure sustainable, equitable outcomes for residents.

How We Do It

Through our Sustainable Homes and Healthy Homes program areas, we employ the following strategies to achieve environmentally sustainable affordable housing:

- **Implement** programs on the ground, uncovering what benefits residents and actively seeking resident feedback
- **Improve** program design and delivery, sharing real-world solutions to inform developers and operators
- **Integrate** proven strategies into management practice, articulating the benefit and impact for owners and residents

Benefits and Value

**Affordable Housing Providers**

Environmental sustainability strategies deliver for the bottom line and preserve affordable homes. For example, SAHF members who have demonstrated a commitment to environmental sustainability have realized direct savings as a result of property improvements and investments. These members lead the way the affordable housing field understands best practice, benefits, and opportunities. On average, incentive funds are worth $950 per unit and upgrades have resulted in an annual cost savings of $160 per unit. As a result of these savings and rebate funds, affordable housing providers have more cash to funnel into property upgrades and/or resident services.

**Residents of Affordable Housing**

Direct financial, health, and quality of life benefits that are available to all are some of the results of environmentally sustainable strategies. Like many SAHF members, Mercy Housing is prioritizing benefits to residents. At Crossroad Gardens Apartments, a 70-unit affordable housing property in Sacramento, California, they replaced HVAC and hot water systems for residents and installed solar panels on the property, resulting in better health, more climate resilient buildings, and financial savings for residents paying utility bills. The Crossroads Gardens renovation also included an on-site food bank, walking track, and an electric vehicle rideshare program to spur better health outcomes for residents.
**Sustainable Homes**

Bringing Sustainability Home drives the transition toward an equitable clean energy future for all with green building strategies that impact the production and operation of quality, environmentally sustainable affordable homes. These practices empower affordable housing providers and residents to be part of the solution to climate change.

Through Sustainable Homes, affordable housing providers are equipped with the tools to:

- Leverage existing and new utility programs to deliver the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Scale up resilient building construction, design, and operations to withstand the effects of climate change
- Adopt emerging energy and water management practices, such as connected devices and new approaches to renewable energy
- Develop sector-specific carbon reduction strategies, such as beneficial electrification and community solar

Our **free Sustainable Homes resources** include state-specific guides, a fact sheet, and case studies that highlight successful models and efficiency programs.

Visit [sahfnet.org/sustainable-homes](http://sahfnet.org/sustainable-homes) to learn more.

**Healthy Homes**

Acting on the belief that a safe and affordable home is a key component of living a healthy life, Bringing Sustainability Home works to increase the production, preservation, and operation of environmentally sustainable housing as an important asset that is integral to a holistic approach to residents’ health.

Through Healthy Homes, affordable housing providers are equipped with the tools to:

- Implement building design best practices that have a positive impact on residents’ health and well-being
- Center residents’ agency in building design and operations by soliciting resident feedback and applying greater accountability mechanisms
- Promote health equity and positive health outcomes by increasing access to resources such as exercise spaces and healthy food

Our **free Healthy Homes resources** include a white paper and informational videos.

Visit [sahfnet.org/healthy-homes](http://sahfnet.org/healthy-homes) to learn more.

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**About SAHF**

Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) is a national nonprofit collaborative which believes that every person deserves a healthy home in a flourishing community. Our mission driven alliance accelerates policy changes, innovation and on-the-ground solutions for the field to achieve our vision of affordable, quality, environmentally sustainable homes within healthy, equitable communities.

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**Our Partners**

[BRIDGE Housing](http://bridgehousing.org)  
[CommonBond Communities](http://commonbondcommunities.org)  
[COMMUNITY HOUSING PARTNERS](http://communityhousingpartners.org)  
[Homes for America](http://homesforamerica.org)  
[mercyHousing](http://mercyhousing.org)  
[National Church Residences](http://nationalchurchresidences.org)  
[NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST](http://nationalhousingtrust.org)  
[PRESERVATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING](http://preservationofaffordablehousing.org)  
[RHF](http://rhfhousing.org)  
[THE COMMUNITY BUILDERS](http://communitybuilders.org)  
[The NHP Foundation](http://nhpfoundation.org)  
[Volunteers of America](http://volunteers.org)