

It's All About the Green – Go Green to Save Green **by Rich Whalen**

Are you purchasing, managing or developing with “Green” appliances? No not avocado green from the 1970's. The question is are these appliances easy on the environment? Talk and action about “Green” is coming to the forefront as we close out 2007 and look forward to 2008. I watched as a recent Sunday Night Football studio broadcast was presented with the lights powered down to bring attention to saving energy. As we all know, the cost of energy is on the rise. On average, apartment owners can raise the value of their building with *Energy Star* rated appliances. Replacing an old refrigerator can save \$150 a year in electricity costs, an old air conditioner \$55, and an old dishwasher \$15 a year. That's \$220 per year per unit. A 15 unit building could save upwards of \$3,300 per year; a 40 unit building \$8,800, and a 150 unit building \$33,000, improving your GRM.

Many consumers are not aware that an older top loading clothes washer uses more than 40 gallons of water per load. A new front loading machine uses up to 60 percent less! *Energy Star* appliances incorporate technologies that use 10 to 50 percent less energy. For a home owner or apartment owner or manager responsible for utility costs the savings can be substantial. Also, utility company and manufacturer rebates are at an all time high, some reaching \$250 for a single appliance.

An online bulk purchasing tool was recently launched as “*Energy Star* Quantity Quotes”. This tool provides help to contractors, builders, property managers and owners in the selection of bulk appliances, light bulbs, fixtures etc. All designed to save money, energy and the environment. Speaking of the environment, simple actions can make a big difference. If just one in 10 homes or apartments switched to *Energy Star* appliances the change would be like planting 1.7 million acres of trees. One of the leading “Green” manufacturers of appliances is Bosch. They are a company that sets the standard in the industry. They operate on a “principle of environmental protection”. This includes a pledge to develop and manufacture products that are safe, eco-friendly and economical. The Bosch free standing convection range for example is made of 98 percent recyclable materials.

On the subject of recycling, appliance change-outs can sometimes become a hassle. Old refrigerators for example contain hazardous materials that must be properly disposed of. Companies that specialize in appliance recycling, such as ARCA, will assume responsibility for proper handling of old appliances. Some utilities will offer cash rebates for replacement of older working appliances. Discarded appliances are second only to automobiles as a source of recycled metals, particularly steel. Using recycled steel has a positive impact on the environment. It takes four times as much energy to produce steel from virgin ore as it does to make the same steel from recycled scrap.

By thinking “Green” when planning new projects and replacement jobs, we can make our planet a better place to live now and for generations to come.

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