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Solar thermal panel on the roof of new affordable housing construction in Woodlawn captures the sun's energy to generate hot water

Woodlawn affordable housing receives EPA Green Infrastructure Grant *adds to redevelopment's environmental features*

Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) has received a \$75,000 Green Infrastructure Grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help reduce pollution of Illinois waterways through environmentally-based landscaping at its new development in the Woodlawn neighborhood of Chicago.

This will add another component to the greening of its Woodlawn properties that includes a solar thermal hot water system and green spaces at its South Cottage Grove Avenue apartment buildings in addition to Energy Star appliances, extensive storm water retention systems, super insulation and tight building envelopes in the other buildings being renovated.

The grant, which was announced to coincide with Earth Day, will help POAH protect the state's water quality through the creation of rain gardens, permeable pavements and planters. "Green infrastructure" refers to storm water management practices with the goal of preserving or restoring natural hydrology and includes methods of using soil and vegetation to promote soil percolation, evapotranspiration and filtration.

"Green Infrastructure Grants are another one of the Agency's tools to control stormwater pollution in Illinois," said Illinois EPA Interim Director John Kim through the agency's press release. "Well over half of the impairments to Illinois waterways are due to nonpoint source and stormwater pollution and it comes from many different sources," he said.

"This grant from EPA will help us expand our comprehensive greening program that is an important part of the revitalization of the former Grove Parc site," said POAH Chicago Development Director Bill Eager.

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The first new construction on Cottage Grove Avenue south of 61st Street in decades the buildings on either side of the street are LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) designed. POAH also recently completed a \$1.5 million renovation of a three-story apartment building at 64th Street and S. Maryland Avenue, where 12 families are now enjoying newly renovated apartments with energy efficient appliances, new windows, flooring and exterior tuckpointing – all of which earned the building a two-star rating from Green Homes for Chicago.

“There was a time when the goals of creating environmentally-healthy housing, energy-efficient housing and affordable housing were not always in synch, but new technologies, materials and awareness have made it possible to change that perception, said Julie Klump, POAH Manager of Design and Technical Services

POAH is also using a Sustainability Training grant from Enterprise Communities to develop and implement a Living in a Green Healthy Home education program for the residents in the new and replacement housing.

Preservation of Affordable Housing, a nonprofit affordable housing developer with an office in Chicago, was one of the country's first four recipients of a green retrofit grant funded by the [HUD Green Retrofit Program for Multifamily Housing](#) in 2010.

In 2011, the Woodlawn team received a HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative implementation grant in the amount of \$30.5 million to revitalize the distressed Section 8 Grove Parc Plaza Apartments, located on a 12-acre site at the heart of the Woodlawn community. The site was historically a barrier to investment in the surrounding blocks but today is being rebuilt as a vibrant, healthy and attractive mixed-use/mixed-income urban community developed through a collaborative planning process with a broad range of community stakeholders.

POAH owns and maintains 7,000 affordable housing units in nine states and the District of Columbia and is actively engaged in greening its portfolio through solar power generation, building envelope improvements, water fixture and lighting retrofits, equipment upgrades and comprehensive green retrofits that include all of these components.