

Cost and Benefits of Green Building Regulations

Presented to the Town of Taos by Sage West Consultants June 2, 2008

New Mexico Build Green

Santa Fe Build Green

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

Albuquerque Energy Conservation Code

Colorado Green Points Program

**NAHB (National Association of Homebuilders) Model Green Home Building
Guidelines**



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New Mexico Build Green:

Benefits

- (1) Guiding principles provide for a priority system for points
- (2) Three levels of compliance allow for a scaled incentive program
- (3) A clear tool kit for the administrator of the program
- (4) Code was developed with intensive builder participation using 28 green home building codes
- (5) Incentives: Gold level compliance with this code qualifies owner for the New Mexico Sustainable Building Tax Credit
- (6) Checklist is thorough
- (7) Refers to existing codes
- (8) Readable format

Costs

- (1) Intensive process for compliance
- (2) 3rd party certification with one designated firm
- (3) A fee for certification
- (4) Checklist is thorough, but not too regionally specific

Santa Fe Build Green:

Benefits

- (1) Qualifies for NM Sustainable Building Tax Credit (?)
- (2) Players in passage of Santa Fe ordinance are willing to assist us in Taos
- (3) Addresses local/historical building materials

Costs

- (1) May not qualify for the NM Sustainable Building Tax credit

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design):

Benefits

- (1) National training and support
- (2) Easy to obtain state/national funding because of name recognition
- (3) 3rd party validation means lower cost to Town of Taos
- (4) Tax credits may be easier to obtain (such as utility sponsored programs that offer incentives)
- (5) Well recognized industry standard
- (6) Industry “Leader”
- (7) Can get building officials, builders, architects, engineers certified in the same thing
- (8) Existing “opportunities”
- (9) Action plan, identifying opportunities, barriers and action

Costs

- (1) Requires professional guidance to obtain certification.
- (2) Water efficiency is only 6% of points available under LEED.
- (3) Would be difficult to obtain certification for average homebuilder in Taos
- (4) Fees
- (5) Must be US Green Building Code members to develop the LEED Application guide
- (6) Scope not applicable to the scale of our town and buildings

Albuquerque Energy Conservation Code:

Benefits

- (1) Very easy to follow guide for increasing energy conservation of homes
- (2) Allowance for zero emission homes
- (3) Historical allowances
- (4) Tables are minimal in scope, relatively easy to read and organized by inspection
- (5) Good format- clear guidelines
- (6) “Low energy” buildings are exempt

Costs

- (1) No water awareness
- (2) Heavy burden on municipality for inspection
- (3) Need more definitions
- (4) Geared toward professional architect/engineer -- May be difficult to interpret by homeowners/property owners.
- (5) Compliance section weak

Colorado Green Points Program:

Benefits:

- (1) Great five page checklist for building inspector is easy to follow and read
- (2) More points required for homes over 1,500 sq. ft. creates a small home incentive
- (3) Combination of self certification and town inspection may lower costs for municipality
- (4) Document is very accessible and in layperson language and no code jargon
- (5) Benefit Category- for each point, you have a specific benefit
- (6) Fairly nice layout

Costs:

- (1) Very minimal costs
- (2) Danger in using CO model is more effort to make sure it is compliant with NM law.

NAHB (National Association of Homebuilders) Model Green Home Building Guidelines:

Benefits:

- (1) More useable format
- (2) “How to verify” column is easy to read
- (3) Good outline

Costs:

- (1) Format of “guiding principles” section difficult to understand
- (2) Verification seems burdensome
- (3) No graphics

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Subject to additional review and updates.