

California Reaches Milestone of 10,000 Green Homes

\$2,000 Green Label Rebate Now Available to Los Angeles Homeowners

With 10,000 California homes now bearing the GreenPoint Rated label, representing the gold standard in green homes, Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County has announced the availability of rebates to help more local homeowners get a green home label. Through the end of 2012, Los Angeles County homeowners can receive up to \$2,000 from Los Angeles County to cover the cost of getting a GreenPoint Rated label for their home.

“We hope these rebates will encourage more Los Angeles homeowners to consider going green.”

To date, California’s 10,000 GreenPoint Rated homes have saved over 112 million gallons of water — enough to fill MacArthur Park Lake five times over — and avoided nearly 9,000 tons of greenhouse gases, the equivalent of taking over 1,500 cars off the road for a year.

GreenPoint Rated is designed to help homeowners ensure their home is built or remodeled to meet high environmental standards. Like a report card for green homes, the rating system assigns points based on five categories: Energy Efficiency, Resource Conservation, Indoor Air Quality, Water Conservation and Community Benefits. Point values are determined based on the use of verified green construction practices and sustainable materials that exceed California's residential building and energy code requirements.

To ensure a home is built or remodeled to maximize efficiency and minimize environmental impacts, GreenPoint Rated assesses points based on green building techniques including:

- Increasing energy efficiency by implementing energy saving construction techniques and equipment such as solar power, solar water heating and ENERGY STAR appliances
- Conserving water with toilets, faucets, showerheads and landscaping that require less water
- Creating healthier indoor air quality by using less toxic paint and installing appropriate ventilation systems to reduce levels of chemicals, dust and mold
- Using reclaimed or sustainable building materials like bamboo and recycled glass to protect forests and reduce landfill waste
- Creating livable communities, enhancing quality of life and minimizing pollution through community benefits like proximity to public transportation, stores and other services

Homeowners who need to make upgrades in order to qualify for a green label can get additional rebates of up to \$8,000 through Energy Upgrade California to defray the costs of energy efficiency improvements — typically the most intensive piece of a green home upgrade. An energy upgrade can increase a home’s efficiency by 10 to 40 percent through fixed improvements like insulation, duct sealing and energy-efficient windows. These energy efficiency improvements can earn a home 20 of the 25 points needed to qualify for the GreenPoint Rated label.

“In designing our green home, we wanted to set an example of sustainability, energy use and healthy living for our entire community,” said Robert Fortunato, owner of the Green Idea House in Hermosa Beach, Calif. “GreenPoint Rated gave us access to a community of experts who have helped us achieve our most important goal: creating a legacy of sustainable living for our

10-year old son.”

Fortunato’s home, which is the first remodel in Los Angeles County to receive the GreenPoint Rated label this year, earned over 150 points on the label’s rating scale. While every GreenPoint Rated home is above average in terms of sustainability and resource conservation, most homes average 88 points.

In addition to environmental benefits, homes that have been built or remodeled using green building techniques may have lower-cost utility bills, home maintenance and repairs. Early research also indicates that homes with a green label may retain their value better, even in a tough real estate market, and are attractive to a growing number of homeowners and buyers.

“A green home is good for the planet, healthier for you and your family — and now, with these new rebates, getting the label that proves your home is green is basically free,” said Howard Choy, General Manager of the County Office of Sustainability, which administers the Green Label Rebate Program and Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County. “We hope these rebates will encourage more Los Angeles homeowners to consider going green.”

About Energy Upgrade California

Energy Upgrade California Los Angeles is administered and overseen by an alliance among L.A. County, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Los Angeles County was one of the first counties in California to roll out this program. Locally, the program provides homeowners with information on home upgrade benefits, available financing, incentives and rebates, and help with finding participating contractors. For more information, visit www.energyupgradeCA.org/LACounty.