

Cleveland: Public housing goes green

CLEVELAND -- A public housing development in the Kinsman neighborhood is getting a major makeover -- to the tune of \$17 million.

Construction crews are currently completing Phase III at Heritage View Homes in Kinsman, and it's being paid for through a federal government grant.

The Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, or CMHA, applied for and received the grant.

The one stipulation?

The money could only be spent on environmentally friendly renovations.



CMHA CEO, Jeffrey Patterson explains, "Public housing is just like any other type of housing and I think just like everyone wants to be able to try and build things that are going to be energy efficient, we have a responsibility to try and do those types of things."

Patterson hopes these changes redefine what public housing is.

"We're trying to make this a community a place where people want to be able to grow, live, and be able to be self-sufficient," Patterson says.

For CMHA, self-sufficiency has two components, one being the house itself.

Solar panels harness and store energy.

Well-insulated walls regulate temperature.

Low-flow appliances save on water.

The second part?

The residents.

While people living in low income housing don't usually pay their own utilities, they will here. That's because of the savings -- an average of 10 percent per month.

"We thought it was important because the savings will really be passed on to the tenants which could least afford high utility bills so we feel really good about that," says August Flucker, an architect who helped to design these renovations.

Project managers expect it to take about 25 years to recoup the \$17 million cost. Still, they say it's a win-win for both the people and the place.

Residents will be able to start moving into Phase III in December.

There are total of 69 units in that development.

Previous tenants will have priority housing, after which the CMHA will select residents from a waiting list.

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