



New student housing showcases sustainability efforts

Penn State Harrisburg's new student housing, now under construction, is planned to be the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified building on campus, and the first LEED-certified housing project within the University. Growing enrollment at Penn State Harrisburg prompted the project, which was designed with energy considerations and sustainability at the forefront.

According to Christopher Hurley, the University's senior director of housing and food services for Commonwealth Campuses, the building also includes features suggested by students. "We met with Penn State Harrisburg students to gather their input about what they would like to see in the new housing," he said. "This is an exciting project for us and the students."

Scheduled for completion in fall 2010, the \$10 million, 30,000-square-foot structure will house 100 first-year students.

The list of the building's green features is extensive. It includes renewable bio-fiber paneling, built-in recycling centers on every level, sustainably managed lumber, and recycled-content materials such as carpet, concrete, and steel. Local resources will be used to support neighboring businesses and cut transportation costs. Other green features include energy-conserving heating and cooling units and energy-efficient lighting systems with motion sensors, and sinks, showers, and toilets that reduce water usage.

The east-west orientation of the building will provide optimal energy conservation and natural lighting and exterior shades will moderate seasonal changes in sun angles. Stormwater will be irrigated to rain gardens that use drought-tolerant, native species plants to help establish a healthy ecosystem.

Safety is another priority in design of the building. It will be equipped with a state-of-the-art sprinkler and fire/smoke detection system, keyless wireless card access for all student room doors, and security surveillance at entry doors. The latest in wireless technology for student computers will be included as well.

Energy saving measures go to new heights

Penn State Harrisburg continues to add energy efficient features into its facilities. Two new classrooms, one shown here, are a showcase for efforts to cut costs and reduce our carbon footprint.



Heating and cooling are computer-controlled, with temperatures maintained during the day and automatically reduced at night.

Energy-conserving light fixtures are used in all classrooms and occupancy sensors activate lights when they are needed and turn them off when they are not.

"Daylight harvesting" systems automatically adjust artificial light according to how much natural light is available.

The University's "Big Fix" software allows public computers throughout campus to be shut down automatically when not in use, reducing power costs by 80 percent this year.

New windows are low-E glass that insulates against heat and cold.

Tiered classrooms require less lighting to meet standards because occupants sit closer to the lighting source.

