



August 2008

Green Building Institute Newsletter

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Dear Lynn,

I hope you are enjoying your summer - the weather was certainly cooperative for our greeNEWit Fest in July. More than 150 people attended the event. Again our thanks to the organizers, all the volunteers, our sponsors and vendors and to every one who came out and had fun.

The Green Building Institute was recently profiled in the [Natural Lifestyle Network](#) - check out their page.

I'm also happy to report that we are currently planning classes for 2009 that will be held in cooperation with other organizations and community colleges in Maryland.

The Institute continues to grow and this is just the beginning!

Stan Sersen
Founder and Board President

Energy Efficiency Interview with Paul Graziano, Baltimore City Housing Commissioner

*Hannah Wood, former Executive Director of The Green Building Institute, interviewed Baltimore City Housing Commissioner **Paul Graziano**, and his partner, **Arlene Conn**, about their energy efficiency efforts in their Bolton Hill home in Baltimore.*

Hannah: Before getting the energy audit, what steps had you taken to make your home energy efficient?

Arlene and Paul: At that point, we had only spent one winter in the home and had not taken any steps yet. After the first year, we realized that the home had energy issues and decided to address them before another winter went by.

Hannah: What issues in your house made you uncomfortable?

Arlene and Paul: One section of our home was much colder than the rest of the home. (The cold section is located on the shady side of the house and has more surfaces exposed to the exterior.) And, the home had inconsistent air flow.

Hannah: What made you decide to get an energy audit?

Arlene and Paul: We wanted to have consistent temperatures throughout our home. We were also concerned about the heat loss and its environmental impact.

Hannah: After the energy improvements were completed, what aspects of your home were improved?

Arlene and Paul: The drafts were significantly eliminated and the air flow was improved by almost 50%.

Hannah: What kind of savings have you experienced on your electric bills?

Arlene and Paul: Two months after the work was completed, our gas consumption was reduced by 20%.

In the winter, the heat rising to the upstairs area now sufficiently warms that area so that we will rarely use the back-up furnace. We have also found that we do not have to leave the thermostat as high as we did prior to the energy improvements because the desired temperature is more quickly reached and maintained.

End results: 50% air leakage reduction and gas consumption reduced by 20%. Maryland Home Performance contractor, Bob Logston, of Home Energy Loss Professionals (HELP) performed the energy audit and the energy improvements.



Hannah: Paul, as the Baltimore City Housing Commissioner, what is the state of the existing homes in Maryland in regards to energy consumption?

Paul: I attribute the relatively high residential energy consumption rate to two factors: 1) Maryland has larger houses than the nation as a whole; and 2) An older housing stock with a higher percentage of units constructed prior to the advent of energy efficient materials, methods and equipment. This is particularly true in Baltimore City where 70% of the units were built before 1960 and one-third before WWII.

The good news is that the large majority of these units are in row houses that can, for relatively modest amounts, be made much more energy efficient.

Hannah: Thank you Paul and Arlene for sharing your energy efficiency success story!

Hannah Wood works on the Maryland Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program. The program encourages homeowners to get whole-house energy audits and energy improvements done by trained and certified contractors.

Find a participating Contractor today at www.mdhomeperformance.org

Upcoming Classes

[Indoor Air Quality](#)

Wednesday September 6th, 2008

[EcoTourism - Trends, Tours & Tips for the Discerning Traveler & Tour Operator](#)

Wednesday September 10th, 2008

[Making Your Home More Energy Efficient](#)

Wednesday September 24th, 2008

For more information or to register for any class [click here](#)

Upcoming Events

**September 2, 2008 - Green Building Network Meeting - Location
Green Building Institute, 7761 Waterloo Road, Jessup MD 6:30pm -
8:30pm**

The Green Building Institute, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, educates the public, building and design professionals about sustainable building practices and technologies.



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Lyn Rowell
Green Building Institute
Board Secretary

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