

Getting WARM

Summer 2006



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AFFORDABLE COMMUNITIES SINCE 1981

WARM Helps Nonprofits Save Money, Reduce Energy Use

WARM's energy audit expertise is helping nonprofits save money and qualify for capital improvement grants through a Non-profit Facilities Center program.

Since 2003, WARM has conducted more than 40 building performance analyses for area nonprofits to identify potential operating cost reductions through energy efficiency of their facilities.

"These analyses allow organizations to make better decisions about building improvements," said Diane Van Buren Jones, Director of the Nonprofit Facilities Center, which helps nonprofits plan, develop and manage facility projects.

"In the past, organizations might have delayed investing in energy improvements due to other pressing needs or a lack of information on return on investment."

"With WARM's building performance analysis, it's easy to make a case for improvements that will immediately reduce operating costs, while making the building more comfortable and healthier. We've made more than \$3 million in grants to nonprofits based on WARM's recommendations."

This is the ultimate win-win program.

*Diane Van Buren Jones
Nonprofit Facilities Center*

"I especially appreciate WARM's training program for staff members of participating nonprofits. Energy savings multiply quickly when members learn techniques they can use at home. This is the ultimate win-win program. The organizations and staff members reduce energy use and the environment is cleaner. That's critical in a community recently ranked worst in the nation for air quality," she said.

WARM'S recommendations cover water efficiency, landscape design/maintenance, improving indoor air quality, and a preventative maintenance schedule to keep systems functioning optimally.

Each building brings a unique set of circumstances. Some are architecturally significant, like the Boys and Girls Republic facilities designed by Minoru Yamasaki. Proposed improvements do not impact the architectural integrity of these buildings.

"The age and construction of the building, how it is used, and what steps have already been taken toward energy efficiency are all important factors in deciding what changes would be most appropriate,"



Adding insulation under these Boys and Girls Republic buildings will reduce utility costs and make them more comfortable without changing their appearance.

explained Doug Black, who conducts many of the analyses.

"But some recommendations are nearly universal. Most organizations haven't changed to energy efficient lighting yet. That switch starts saving money almost immediately," Black said.

One project, a geothermal system in a group home, eliminated heat bills and reduced hot water costs. A payback time, originally calculated at seven years, continues to shrink as utility costs rise.

WARM TRAINING CENTER AT 25 – BOB CHAPMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"Energy Crisis Looming", "Neighborhood Revitalization Efforts Focus on Housing" Sound familiar? These are today's headlines.

They were the headlines back when WARM was founded too. That might be a little depressing unless you recognize the progress made in community development over the past 25 years, and have the strength to continue the battles.

WARM's first focus was construction-related job creation and training to attack high unemployment and community decay. As the community development industry grew, WARM morphed into a technical assistance provider to nonprofit housing groups and a builder of homeowner skills; a partner in neighborhood revitalization with local CDCs. This partnership continues.

WARM understands that truly affordable housing *must* be both energy efficient and healthy. We have honed our expertise in these areas in order to be an effective knowledge base for both organizations and individual residents in Southeast Michigan. Consider:

- We are a State of Michigan Energy Demonstration Center. Come to one of our "Getting WARM" mini open houses and see for yourself!
- We have conducted hundreds of energy education workshops and several thousand home energy visits over the past five years, showing people how they can control their consumption. Independent evaluation shows residents' energy bills dropping measurably as a result of this work.
- We have saved nonprofit organizations thousands of dollars on

their energy bills through our Building Performance Analyses, money they can use for mission related programming.

- We consulted with Habitat For Humanity to ensure all 30 of last year's Jimmy Carter Work Project houses in Detroit last were built to ENERGY STAR standards — showing other Habitat affiliates that energy efficiency is an achievable goal.

Simply surviving for 25 years as a small nonprofit is, in itself, a notable accomplishment. It means WARM has had dedicated staff and Boards of Directors, along with supporters who recognized that it was doing needed work and doing it well. But we have to do more.

The one word I would use to summarize our challenge for the future it is *impact*.

We must have a greater *impact* on the issues we seek to address and the people we seek to help. The issues are vital. If we care about the future of our children and grandchildren, sustainable living is the only responsible option. To have *impact*, we must raise our visibility and have the resources to reach more people and organizations. I ask for your support to help WARM make a strong *impact* in its mission of promoting resource efficient, healthy homes and communities.

A note of thanks . . .

. . . to Jack Schwab as he leaves Chase Bank. Jack has been a tireless advocate for community development in Detroit. So many organizations, WARM among them, have benefited from Jack's involvement and advocacy.

CELEBRATE WITH US!

**WARM TRAINING CENTER
25TH ANNIVERSARY**

**AT THE
FORD ROUGE PLANT
VISITOR CENTER**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12 AT 6 PM

Enjoy a strolling dinner

Take the Rouge Factory Tour

Bid on "Green" Silent Auction items

For information about tickets, sponsorship, advertising in the "Living into the Future: a Guide for Sustainable Community" publication or to donate auction items, call (313) 894-1030.

**IMPROVE INDOOR AIR QUALITY AND
BREATHE EASY IN YOUR HOME**

A recent study sited Detroit as having the worst air quality of 100 U.S. cities. Many people don't know that indoor air quality can be significantly worse than outdoor air, *even in very polluted cities*. Increasingly asthma and other health problems are linked to indoor air quality. Here's how to breathe easy:

- **Use nontoxic cleaning, beauty & bath products.** Common products like scouring powders, disinfectants and even hair products contain toxins. Find options on WARM's website.
- **Control moisture.** Use exhaust fans, repair plumbing leaks promptly and make sure your dryer is vented to the outside.
- **Remodel for air quality.** Replace old carpeting with solid flooring, where possible, or nontoxic carpet. When painting, use no-VOC paints, which don't offgas toxins into the air.
- **Keep houseplants.** Studies prove that they clean common toxins out of the air. WARM's website has a link to a list of the most effective plants at removing air pollution.
- **Install a carbon monoxide detector** if you have a gas furnace, water heater, stove and/or dryer.
- **Test your home for radon** using a test kit labeled as meeting EPA requirements.



WARM Training Center
4835 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, MI 48210
(313) 894-1030
www.warmtraining.org

SAVE THESE DATES

Getting WARM - July 11 & 25, August 8 & 22 at 8:30 am
Call WARM to reserve a spot at one of these one-hour tours of the Energy Demonstration Center and introductions to WARM

Bioneers Conference—October 20-22 at Wayne State
Go to: www.sustainabledetroit.org/bioneers/ for information and to register for this internationally acclaimed conference

Financial Institutions Conference - October 25
"Stabilizing and Sustaining Our Gains" Conference on strengthening neighborhoods. Look for a mailing in September.

www.warmtraining.org

Visit our website for our:

- Updated calendar of classes and events
- Green Launchpad with links to other websites
- Metro Detroit Green Building Resource Directory
- WARM Staff Directory
- Board of Directors

Building Smart, Healthy Homes

Do you want your new home to provide:



- extra comfort
- durability
- safety
- resale value and
- lower energy bills?

Whether you are a builder or a home buyer, these advantages make for a better home. WARM Training Center is proud to present the **Michigan Build! ENERGY STAR Homes** program, which is helping home buyers and builders create smarter healthier homes.

Homes in the program typically save 30% more on energy bills than standard homes and have improved air quality and safety. For more information, contact us at info@michiganbuild.org or 313-894-1030 x.119 or visit www.michiganbuild.org.