



Apartment Complex Earns Largest PG&E Multifamily Energy Efficiency Rebate

By Teresa O'Dea Hein, Managing Editor

SEPTEMBER 05, 2006 -- Richmond, Calif.—Installing energy-efficient upgrades can really pay off. Besides the immediate savings in utility costs, GMH Capital Partners, based in Newtown Square, Pa., found this to be strikingly true when it recently earned the largest energy efficiency rebate for multifamily housing ever awarded by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The company received a \$327,428 rebate check from PG&E for installing energy-efficient upgrades at its Bella Vista at Hilltop Apartments, a 42-building, 1,008-unit apartment complex located here in the East Bay area north of Oakland, Calif.

“Rebate programs are a great way for apartment owners to increase the overall value of their property, reduce operating expenses and save residents money on utility bills, while the entire complex benefits from improved lighting quality and efficiency,” says Rand Ginsburg, senior vice president of operations for GMH Capital Partners. “As property owners across the U.S. struggle with rising energy costs, it’s important to look at all options. At GMH, we leveraged PG&E’s rebate program to reduce our operating costs and improve Bella Vista’s curb appeal, while passing the savings onto our residents.”

To qualify for the dollar-for-dollar rebate, GMH Capital Partners installed 2,291 T8 fluorescent lamps and rewired more than 6,000 Energy Star hardwired fixtures for indoor lighting as well as outdoor lighting in common areas like hallways, stairwells, laundry rooms and garages at the apartment complex. The lighting upgrades will save about 802,578 kilowatt hours annually—enough electricity to power 120 average-sized homes.

Beverly Alexander, vice president of customer satisfaction at PG&E, says, “This is a wonderful example of how the Multifamily Rebate Program provides many benefits such as energy savings to both tenants and building owners, better lighting and more comfortable indoor temperatures for residents while also helping the environment and the state power grid by reducing energy consumption.”

GMH Capital Partners will receive additional rebates from PG&E this year because it is also installing high-performance dual-pane windows instead of the existing single-pane windows and sliding glass doors; this work is expected to be completed by December 1, 2006. The company is also upgrading clothes washers and water heaters when replacement is needed with more energy-efficient models.

When the window, washer and water heater upgrades are completed, they will save about 5,023 gas therms per year. The annual savings in energy costs will be about \$120,000 for electric and \$6,000 in gas bills for tenants and the building owner. More than half of that will go to Bella Vista residents, saving the average tenant about \$68 a year on electric and gas bills.

Since GMH Capital Partners acquired the Bella Vista at Hilltop Apartments in 2005, the company has made \$7.5 million of capital improvements to reposition the property as a Class A asset in the market. Built in 1988, the garden-style apartment complex consists of 42 three-story buildings on about 50 acres. Bella Vista at Hilltop’s amenities include a clubhouse, five swimming pools, a fitness center, sauna, four lighted tennis courts, racquetball court, covered parking, controlled access and on-site management.

GMH Capital Partners provides integrated real estate investment sales and asset management services to real estate investors, institutions and developers in most primary and secondary markets across the U.S. Its Asset Services division currently manages a variety of property types in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Florida, Texas and California.