

## INTERAGENCY SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

### *February 24, 2009 Meeting Report*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Interagency Sustainability Working Group (ISWG) held its 42nd meeting on February 24, 2009. The working group is chaired by Matt Gray of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). The ISWG is composed of members representing 20 major Federal departments and a number of independent agencies. This meeting was held at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, D.C. The first half of the meeting was open to both Federal and non-Federal members, and the second half was open to Federal members only. The next meeting, scheduled for April 21, 2009, will be held from 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM at the General Services Administration headquarters in Washington, D.C.

#### **NON-FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATES**

**(Note: No Federal updates were provided at this meeting)**

##### **International Facility Management Association Foundation (IFMA)**

Eric Teicholz provided an update on the IFMA Foundation's Sustainability Task Force activities. The task force was commissioned in November, 2008, and completed its report on February 22, 2009. The report consists of five components: position statement, education and credentialing, research and dissemination, policy analysis, and the foundation of a standing committee as a structure to continue the IFMA's sustainability work.

The report's policy analysis component provides a set of recommendations for facility investments with regards to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), including new approaches such as system design, an updated sustainable workforce, and assisting agencies in coordination of ARRA funds and communication plans. The report also provides recommendations for education and training and climate change mitigation.

##### **Whole Building Design Guide**

Richard Paradis provided an update on the Whole Building Design Guide (WBDG), focusing on hydrology issues. WBDG [technical guidance](#) is now available for download.

## **U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)**

Melissa Gallagher-Rogers provided an update on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) changes scheduled to be released in 2009. The LEED Reference Guide and rating system is planned to be unveiled in March; in April, the USGBC website will be open to 2009 projects. Credits will essentially be the same as before; changes will be incremental, and Ms. Gallagher-Rogers does not foresee any additional costs to projects.

### **Upcoming Conferences in 2009**

- *GSA Sustainability Workshop: The New Sustainable Frontier*; Washington, DC; March 6.
- *National Facilities Management & Technology Conference (NFMT)* – Baltimore, Maryland; March 10-12.
- *Countdown to a Sustainable Energy Future...Net-Zero and Beyond* – San Francisco, California; March 29-31; Sponsored by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE).
- *National Symposium on Market Transformation* – Washington, DC; March 29-31. Sponsored by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE).
- *US Green Building Council's Federal Summit* – Washington, DC; May 14 (tentative).
- *Federal Environmental Symposium (West)* – Grand Mound, Washington; June 2-4.
- *Federal Environmental Symposium (East)* – Bethesda, Maryland; June 16-18.
- *GovEnergy* – Providence, Rhode Island; August 9-12.

### **Upcoming ISWG Meetings**

- April 21st
- June 23<sup>rd</sup>
- August 8<sup>th</sup> (in conjunction with GovEnergy – not a regular bi-monthly meeting)
- Sept 15<sup>th</sup>
- December 8th

### **PRESENTATIONS**

- *Assignable Energy Efficiency Tax Deduction for Public Buildings* – Lane Burt, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Andrew Goldberg, American Institute of Architects (AIA)
- *Implementing Section 438 of the Energy Independence And Security Act* – Jenny Molloy and Robert Goo, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- *Updates on the American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA)* - Cyndi Vallina and Angela Donatelli, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* – Brad Gustafson (DOE-FEMP)
- *ISWG Transition Plan* – Matt Gray (DOE-FEMP)

The PowerPoint presentations are available for download on the [ISWG website](#).

## **ISWG MEETING NOTES AND PRESENTATIONS**

### ***Assignable Energy Efficiency Tax Deduction for Public Buildings***

Lane Burt from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Andrew Goldberg from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) presented an overview on a new energy efficiency tax deduction for public buildings. The deduction allows a building owner to claim a deduction for expenditures made as part of a new or existing building designed to reduce the total annual energy used in the operation of the building. The deduction is up to \$1.80 per square foot of building area for installation of systems that reduce total energy and power costs by 50 percent or more, compared with a reference building.

There are a number of benefits for designers who take advantage of the deduction, including providing an incentive for designers to reach even deeper energy savings than the law currently requires. The deduction also encourages integrated design process to achieve increased savings, and can help cover the added costs of integrated design, start-up commissioning, and LEED documentation.

However, there are several barriers to widespread use of the deduction. For example, there are no government-wide guidelines defining authority to designate this tax deduction. Also, some concerns have been raised regarding whether the deduction could be applied to construction. Mr. Burt ([lburt@nrdc.org](mailto:lburt@nrdc.org)) and Mr. Goldberg ([AGoldberg@aia.org](mailto:AGoldberg@aia.org)) are working to simplify the process and documentation. Please contact them if you have any suggestions or case studies to help inform this process.

### ***Implementing Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA)***

Jenny Molloy and Robert Goo from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) described the new DRAFT Guidance for Section 438 of EISA: Storm Water Runoff Requirements for Federal Development Projects. The requirement stipulates that development at a Federal Facility must “maintain or restore, to the maximum extent technically feasible, the predevelopment hydrology of the property with regard to the temperature, rate, volume, and duration of flow.” The presenters highlighted best practice green infrastructure practices in order to

fulfill this mandate so that precipitation can be managed and treated more naturally.

The guidance is designed to help stormwater managers meet the requirement to retain and reuse stormwater to the “Maximum Extent Technically Feasible” for at least 95 percent of all 24-hour storms. The presenters also described a number of case studies and modeling scenarios in order to demonstrate procedures for site assessments, determining appropriate control techniques, and providing modeling protocols and outputs to demonstrate verification of compliance.

Comments on the guidance are due March 17, 2009, and should be emailed to [molloy.jennifer@epa.gov](mailto:molloy.jennifer@epa.gov) or [goo.robert@epa.gov](mailto:goo.robert@epa.gov).

### ***Updates on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)***

Cyndi Vallina and Angela Donatelli from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provided an overview on ARRA. General Guidance was issued on February 18<sup>th</sup>, and each agency is working on its own internal processes. The Act has several reporting requirements, including weekly agency reports to OMB on major and planned actions beginning March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Agencies must account for their prime and subcontractors as well, including how many jobs were created or retrained as a result of a project. Each agency is required to designate a point of contact for who will be accountable for ARRA actions. The contact will provide a high level of coordination to avoid informational bottlenecks.

The new Administration also has requirements under EISA. Data from agency scorecards will now be publicly available, and are to be submitted to Congress. Agencies must also provide their Section 434 reporting to OMB regarding their energy efficiency capital planning guidance.

### ***American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009***

Brad Gustafson from the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) provided a breakdown of ARRA funding related to Federal greening, agency by agency. The law stipulates different requirements for each agency related to whether the funding must be spent on energy efficiency and/or renewable energy, although OMB Guidance includes the following statement:

*Federal Infrastructure Investments: a description of agency plans to spend funds effectively to comply with energy efficiency and green building requirements and to demonstrate Federal leadership in sustainability, energy efficiency and reducing the agency’s environmental impact.*

Mr. Gustafson also described FEMP’s planned role in assisting agencies as they utilize ARRA funding for Federal greening.

***ISWG Transition Plan: Past Accomplishments, Current Priorities, and New Opportunities***

Matt Gray, Chair of the ISWG, outlined the draft ISWG Transition Plan, which is being submitted to the new Administration. The Council on Environmental Quality requested the plan, which summarizes past ISWG accomplishments, provides an ISWG vision and priorities going forward, and prepares ISWG members for transitions within their own organizations.

Priorities moving forward include making sustainability the standard practice in building design, transforming the existing built environment by integrating sustainability into campus and portfolio management, measuring and verifying building performance, and institutionalizing greenhouse gas management and abatement.

The final document, as well as the Executive Summary, will be distributed to ISWG members as soon as they are completed.