

Two energy efficiency ordinances pass

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New homes and homes up for sale in the unincorporated area must be made energy efficient according to new standards spelled out in two ordinances tentatively adopted by county supervisors Tuesday night.

The liberal board majority of Chairman Robley Levy, Gary Patton and Joe Cucchiara approved the ordinances "in concept," sent them to the environmental coordinator for review and directed they come back before the board for final consideration as soon as possible.

It's estimated it will be about five weeks before the ordinances are returned for final consideration.

The ordinance affecting new homes requires all residential building plans submitted to the county after Jan. 1, 1983 to comply with energy regulations in Title 24 of the state administrative code.

The regulations not only affect new homes, but also additions to existing homes when the additions involve space that's either heated or cooled.

The Title 24 regulations are scheduled to go into effect statewide on June 15, 1983 for single family homes and on Dec. 31, 1983 for multiple-family dwellings.

The so-called retrofit ordinance affecting existing homes requires either that energy-saving devices be installed before a home is sold or that they be installed within a year after the sale.

If the person buying the home is going to put in the required devices, he or she must place \$1,000 in escrow, according to the ordinance. Once the devices are installed, the money will be returned.

Concerned that the cost of such devices may be prohibitive and even dissuade some from buying homes, supervisors agreed that the cost shall not exceed \$1,000.

Supervisor E. Wayne Moore Jr. was the only board member opposed to the \$1,000 limit. He claimed that the sale of a home could be held up by the county if, for some reason, the costs exceeded \$1,000.

Due to a concern raised by Supervisor Dan Forbus that the retrofit ordinance apply to all homes, particularly those known to have been built in the Last Chance area near Davenport without building permits, supervisors unanimously agreed there will be no exceptions to the ordinance. This led Patton to quip, "All those

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The energy-saving measures required by the retrofit ordinance include ceiling insulation, weatherstripping, water heater insulation blankets, low-flow shower devices, caulking or sealing of openings in the building's exterior and insulation of ducts, fitting joints, pipes and the like.

It's estimated that installation of these devices will result in a 30 percent energy savings. PG&E currently is offering no-interest loans to finance the installation of all these measures, except for insulation of hot-water pipes.

The Title 24 regulations for new homes require such energy-saving measures as insulation, weatherstripping, caulking, window glazing, properly-sized heating systems and energy-efficient appliances. Passive solar design would be another way of complying with the ordinance.

The new regulations are estimated to save owners of new homes half of the energy costs they would have paid in homes built under current standards.

Both ordinances were recommended in an extensive "Citizens' Plan for Energy Reliance" put together by a cross-section of the community under the auspices of Energy Future Santa Cruz.

"These are really the first two actions the county has taken on the plan," John Cohn of Energy Future Santa Cruz said of the tentative approvals.

Energy Future Santa Cruz is a non-profit group that received a National Science Foundation grant to put the plan together.

Supervisors Tuesday also were scheduled to consider accepting the plan, approving numerous recommendations in the plan and approving an ordinance regulating windmills. But due to the late hour and complexity of the plan, these items were continued until Oct. 26.

The tentative approvals of the ordinances came after a four-hour public hearing during which proponents claimed such laws are needed to save money spent on energy and opponents asserted such ordinances create too much governmental control over people's lives.

More than 150 people attended the hearing in the supervisors' chambers.

Jack McDermott, who does energy audits locally for PG&E, told supervisors homes in this area are like leaky buckets.

Speaking in favor particularly of the retrofit ordinance, McDermott said, "I've been kicking people in the butts to do something and maybe this ordinance will get them to do something . . .

"I liken the houses in this county to buckets with holes. People keep pouring energy into those buckets and it keeps leaking out. The Board of Supervisors now has the opportunity to plug some of those holes."

Senior citizen Roy Flager boasted

that since he built his new home at 342 Pine St. to be energy efficient, his PG&E bills have been \$17, \$15 and \$13.37 over the past three months.

While many lauded the economic benefits of such ordinances, including the fact they'll generate new jobs, several spoke bitterly against the new laws.

Capitola resident Asa Lake said she opposed the government control the ordinances will bring about. While many state it's the government's duty to protect the health and welfare of citizens through such laws, Lake said, experts have shown that insulation causes indoor pollution and disease.

Elaine Bauer, who owns a weatherizing business, also spoke against more government controls.

"To me, self-reliance means reliance on oneself," Bauer said. "It doesn't mean government coming down and forcing energy conservation on everyone."

Numerous community groups in letters to the board asked that Tuesday's hearing on the retrofit ordinance be delayed to give citizens more time to review the ordinance.

But an attempt by Moore to delay consideration until Nov. 9 failed, with only himself and Forbus supporting a delay.

Levy claimed the delay wasn't necessary since citizens will now have five weeks to review the ordinance before it comes back to the board for final consideration.