

Supervisors Will Consider Energy Codes

A proposal to adopt strict energy standards for new homes in the county will be considered by supervisors when they meet Tuesday beginning at 9 a.m. in room 525 of the County Center.

Both Planning Director Kris Schenk and the county Energy Commission are recommending the county adopt as a local ordinance the Energy Conservation Building Code (Title 24) regulations adopted by the state Energy Commission.

The matter will be taken up during the board's morning session.

These regulations — which would add approximately \$1,300 to the cost of building a new single family home — were to go into effect statewide on July 13. Their implementation was delayed by a bill recently signed by Gov. Edmund Brown Jr., however.

But, Schenk pointed out in a letter to supervisors, this delay by the state doesn't preclude the county from adopting the regulations as its own.

He noted in his letter that while the regulations would add to the cost of a new home, they would also save energy costs.

"Over a 30-year period, a typical homeowner in Santa Cruz County would realize a net savings, even after incurring the costs of the standards, of approximately \$18,000," Schenk stated.

While the energy-saving features required by the standards would add approximately \$11.47 a month to a 30-year mortgage payment, they also will save a homeowner about \$14.92 a month in utility costs, Schenk said.

"These savings become even more significant when the rapid escalation in the cost of home heating is considered," he added.

Schenk is suggesting the board order an ordinance to be prepared and that they consider such an ordinance no later than Oct. 12. He also is recommending the ordinance not effect building plans approved prior to Jan. 1, 1983.

During their afternoon session Tuesday, supervisors will consider amending the use permit for Lone Star's Olympia Quarry in Zayante so that the company is given sufficient time to acquire land from PG&E for a new access road.

Also in the afternoon, supervisors will consider extending the time limits on tentative subdivision maps issued for The Forest and The Meadows housing developments at Cox and Day Valley roads.

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