



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project

Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

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Boulder County Leads Region in Requiring New Homes to be Pre-Wired for Electric Vehicles

BOULDER – In an action that became effective on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, the Boulder County Board of Commissioners adopted the most recent—and advanced—building codes for energy efficiency and added requirements that all new homes be wired for electric vehicles and solar panels.

The added requirement for electric vehicle pre-wire makes Boulder County one of the few jurisdictions in the nation—and first in the southwest—to require that garages associated with new homes, duplexes and townhouses come with either 240-volt electric vehicle charging units or the wiring or conduit needed for easy installation of the charging units later on.

“It’s a good example of leadership on the part of the community,” said Mike Salisbury, Transportation Program Associate at the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project and an advocate to the County for the amendment. “Pre-wiring for electric vehicles as part of new construction can save the average homeowner \$1,000 over the cost of a retrofit outlet for a plug-in vehicle.”

The new codes also have an added requirement that builders either install solar panels for generating electricity or heating water or the wiring and/or conduit for future solar installations.

Homes built to the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code codes that the commissioners adopted are tightly constructed and fine-tuned for very efficient heating and cooling. With the addition of solar panels, they are likely be net zero energy, meaning that they produce as much power as they use.

Commissioners passed a related resolution on Jan. 3 which lays out the county’s intention to move towards a net zero energy requirement for new residential construction by 2022, said Commissioner Will Toor.

“The upshot of the commissioners’ decision to adopt the latest energy conservation codes is that buyers of new residences will enjoy extraordinary comfort and very low utility bills,” said Jim Meyers, Director of the Buildings Program at the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project.

The new building codes apply to unincorporated areas of Boulder County.

Southwest Energy Efficiency Project is a public interest organization that promotes energy efficiency in the southwestern states of Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

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