

The Energy Commission has coupled energy efficiency with promotion of solar photovoltaic systems through its New Solar Homes Partnership. To qualify for a photovoltaic incentive, the new home has to exceed the Title 24 building efficiency code by a minimum of 15 percent. This efficiency-first philosophy allows the photovoltaic system to cover more of the building's electric load. Builders are encouraged to exceed the code by 35 percent. These levels were selected so the builders could qualify for efficiency incentives from the utility programs.

**Title 24 Building Codes and Standards:  
Considering a "Zero Net Energy" Future**

SB 1 requires the Energy Commission to examine whether solar photovoltaics should be mandated in future building standards. This study must identify all life cycle costs and benefits and demonstrate that solar photovoltaic systems are cost effective in order to include them in the Title 24 building standards. Periodic updates are required.

The California Public Utilities Commission, through its "Big Bold Energy Efficiency Strategies," has adopted three programs designed to move all new residential and commercial construction to a zero net energy standard. The goal of this program is to reach zero net energy in residential construction by 2020 and in commercial construction by 2030.

Southern California Edison Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Alan J. Fohrer said that "significant additional progress will be made as a result of this new policy...Now the commission has made advancing customer energy efficiency the business of every department and employee of an investor-owned utility." The Energy Commission applauds the CPUC's significant advancement of energy efficiency programs. Together, success with these programs can result in changing the paradigm for energy growth in California.

For the building standards to reach the aggressive goals described in the various policy reports, initiatives, and legislation, the Energy Commission will have to consider vigorous efficiency coupled with technologies like solar photovoltaic systems. The Energy Commission recently initiated the investigative process required by Senate Bill 1 to determine whether solar photovoltaic systems should be mandated in future building standards.

Several bills were introduced, but failed to pass, this legislative session to encourage or mandate green building practices in the residential, commercial, and state building sectors. Nevertheless, both the Department of Housing and Community Development (for residences) and the California Building Standards Commission (for all building sectors) continue to be engaged in the goal of creating a green building guideline to publish in the California Building Code.

In view of the importance that expanded efficiency efforts will play in achieving the AB 32 goals, the Energy Commission will pursue legislation to require an on-site audit and an

appropriate level of cost-effective efficiency improvements in existing buildings at time of sale. Absent that legislative authority at this point, the Energy Commission issued a booklet directed at homebuyers that provides information about home energy audits and rating programs. We are marketing this information through home warranty company websites.