

THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

POSTED: Wednesday, Sep. 21, 2011

Public housing in Bellingham gets green roof, solar panels

KIE RELYEA - THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

BELLINGHAM - The green makeover of Lincoln Square will include the largest green roof in Bellingham and the largest solar installation in Whatcom County.

People can see for themselves during a tour and celebration Thursday, Sept. 22, that has been dubbed "Lincoln Green."

Located on York Street, Lincoln Square is one of three high-rise buildings that serve as public housing and are undergoing renovations, thanks to more than \$9.9 million in federal stimulus money.



PHILIP A. DWYER | THE BELLINGHAM HERALD - Todd Nelson, development manager for Bellingham Whatcom County Housing Authorities, explains to Mariah Ross, business development manager for Sustainable Connections, how new solar panels work on the roof of the Lincoln Square building in Bellingham Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 20, 2011. The 90 panels were put there as part of a \$9.9 million federal grant to make the building more energy-efficient.

[CLICK FOR MORE PHOTOS](#)

The other two apartment buildings getting makeovers are Washington Square and Chuckanut Square.

They total 396 units in Bellingham. All are properties of Bellingham Whatcom County Housing Authorities and all were built from 1969 to 1971.

The project to make them more water- and energy-efficient began October 2010.

At Lincoln Square, that looks like a green roof - made up of three sections - totaling 6,200 square feet, and 90 solar panels that will generate up to 21,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity a year, covering 3 percent of the projected annual electricity use at Lincoln.

People who go to the Thursday event will be able to tour the green roof and see the solar panels, and learn about both from experts.

The green roof was installed by Hytech Roofing of Lynden.

People can learn about the engineering and design of green roofs, suitable waterproof membranes and drainage, what materials to select including for plants and soil, and how to maintain such roofs.

Green roofs are beneficial because they reduce runoff, reduce outside noise, help purify air and insulate buildings, according to Hytech.

And they help to "purify the water before it goes into runoff," said Mariah Ross, sustainable business development manager at the nonprofit Sustainable Connections, which is helping the housing authority educate the community about its green renovation projects.

Lincoln Square also will be home to a living green wall that will be covered with vegetation. That project, along with a rain garden, is in the works.

"It will be beautiful," Ross said. "It will be this gorgeous, green plush wall."

Sustainable Connections is also teaching residents about green living because as much as half of a building's energy performance is linked to the behavior of occupants or management, according to the nonprofit.

IF YOU GO

What: Free tour and celebration of the green roof and solar panels at Lincoln Square.

Where: 409 York St., Bellingham. Access is outside and around the building. Follow the signs. People going to the event don't need to enter the building.

When: 4 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22.

RSVP: erin@sconnect.org or 360-647-7093, ext. 108.

Details: sustainableconnections.org and projectbellingham.wordpress.com.

Read more: <http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2011/09/21/2193654/public-housing-in-bellingham-gets.html#ixzz1Yc2BpUAE>