

Bella Vista

Multi-Family Energy Efficiency Upgrades

St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP) weatherized Bella Vista Apartments in Bunnell, Florida, through the Weatherization Assistance Program, reducing the energy burden of tenants who live at or below poverty level, and winning high praise from the residents and the owner. The insulation did not meet current Florida building code



Bella Vista, a 21-year-old USDA property was weatherized by SJHP, cutting the residents' energy bills by more than half.

and many of the water heaters, while functional were inefficient, covered with rust and the tanks contained large amounts of debris.

Combined, these factors and others led to high energy bills. While the national average for non-low income households dedicated to energy bills is approximately 3.3%, Bella Vista tenants were paying almost 7%.

St. Johns Housing Partnership's trained inspectors and weatherization workers along with three contracting companies (heating and air, insulation, and plumbing) worked to:

- Replace water heaters and air conditioning systems;
- Install attic insulation to the R-36 standard;
- Install bathroom exhaust fans (to help circulate air and draw out excess humidity);
- Caulk, seal and weather-strip air penetrations (doors, windows, pipes, etc.);
- Seal duct work;
- Replace faucet aerators;
- Install low-flow showerheads and compact fluorescent lighting (CFLs);
- Insulate water lines at the water heater; and
- Install fire & smoke alarms as a safety measure.



New energy efficient water heaters were installed.

Florida was the recipient of over \$176 million in ARRA funding for Weatherization, an amount it could not have expended within regulatory deadlines if limited to single-family housing as its only allowable use. Working with its partner, the National Housing Trust, the Florida Housing Coalition persuaded the state to include multi-family housing as an eligible use for WAP—something that only a handful of states allowed. Using ARRA Weatherization funds for multi-family housing promoted preservation, created jobs, and expended the funds on time.

Every measure the weatherization program takes is determined by extensive testing using trained inspectors with sophisticated equipment and attention to detail. The program's goal is to reduce the monthly energy use by determining a cost-effective combination of changes to current energy use. The measures taken immediately impact current tenants and provide long-term improvements that will benefit future tenants. SJHP completed the 45-unit project at a cost of \$203,095 (\$4,513 per unit) providing immediate and long-lasting savings for the tenants. HNN