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**NORTHERN COMMUNITIES
LAND TRUST**

Northern Communities Land Trust Rewarded for going Green

Ten blighted homes in Duluth will soon be getting a “Green” makeover. Northern Communities Land Trust recently received a \$250,000 grant from the HOME Competitive Reallocation of CHDO Funds to Provide for Energy Efficient and Environmentally Friendly Housing for Low-Income Families. A total of 6 grants were awarded nationally, with the Land Trust being the sole grantee for single-family, rehabbed homes.

HUD pre-ranked the participating jurisdictions based on their commitment to increase the supply of affordable homes, their effective utilization of HOME funds, and their capacity to match resources. The City of Duluth scored 62 out of 75. The Land Trust’s Housing Development Director, Sarah Hannigan acknowledged, “If the city had not been ranked that high, we would not have been able to be competitive.”

The Land Trust was well positioned to compete through its participation in the Minnesota Green Communities Demonstration Project since 2006. “We were already doing over 80% of what they were asking us to do,” Hannigan noted. “The new components that will be added as a result of this award are solar water heaters and solar radiant heat.”

Duluth LISC and the Home Depot also helped prepare the Land Trust for the opportunity to “green” its existing rehabs. “They provided funds for testing on 16 homes. It helped us develop environmental-based scopes and general data that we could apply to all future projects,” stated Jodi Slick, Executive Director of Common Ground Construction.

Using the Green Communities criteria, the Land Trust focuses on the following:

Indoor Air Quality

- Low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) products
- Protect homeowners from formaldehyde off-gassing
- Mold Prevention
- Energy-star exhaust fans

Water Conservation

- Water-conserving fixtures
- Effective management of rainwater on site

Location

- Close proximity to community resources
- Working with solar orientation when possible

Energy Efficiency

- Energy Star Certification
- Efficient Lighting

With rising energy costs, solar water systems provide “the best investment for the quickest payback,” Slick explained. It will provide 50% of the houses’ domestic heat and 10% of the radiant heat.

“We are very excited,” exclaimed Hannigan. “The grant gives us the chance to continue to further enhance the environmental sustainability of our affordable housing projects.”