

FHA PARTNERS WITH MOC, UNITIL TO UPGRADE HEATING



CLIFF CLARK / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

During the rebate announcement of the partnership between Unitil, the Montachusett Opportunity Council and the Housing Authority on Wednesday, Doug Carpenter (far right), the authority's maintenance director, pointed to one of the hot water heaters that will be replaced. One of the six outdated boilers that will also be replaced can be seen on the far left. At the announcement were: (from left); Unitil's Kevin Parse, MOC's Linda Duffy, Janel Hebert and Karen Huletta, FHA Executive Director Doug Bushman, FHA Board Member David Basilio, the Authority's Genesis Ruiz and Carpenter.

The new systems will use about 20% less natural gas annually

By Cliff Clark

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FITCHBURG » Unitil has partnered with the Fitchburg Housing Authority and Montachusett

Opportunity Council to make energy efficiency improvements to Canton Valley housing complex. "The FHA is very excited about the new grant of \$149,000 and we want to thank our partners, MOC, and Unitil in making this happen," said Doug Bushman, executive director of the Housing Authority at the com-

plex Wednesday morning. Bushman, who oversees the city's public housing and HUD section 8 programs, said the residential complex at 41 Valley St. will soon have four high efficiency boilers and hot water storage tanks installed as part of the nearly \$150,000 project. Because the old heating system operated at only 75% efficiency, the

upgrade to a more energy-efficient system qualified for a 100% rebate relative to project cost. "This is an excellent three-way partnership of the public, private and nonprofit sectors and will reduce the Housing Authority's energy consumption saving taxpayer money which can be used for other services. In addition,

Partner

FROM PAGE 3A

the Housing Authority will be drawing less energy from the grid which helps all energy users," said Bushman.

Karen Hulette, who manages MOC's Heating System Repair and Replacement Program in partnership with Unitil was also at the Canton Valley complex on Wednesday during the formal announcement of the partnership.

"This is a significant project that will not only save money, but improve the comfort and reliability of the heating systems," said Hulette.

It's anticipated that new heating equipment will use about 20%

less natural gas annually or 6,233 therms. The electric upgrades include variable motor drives that will annually save 8,211 kWh of electricity, enough energy to supply a home for an entire year.

In addition to replacing the old boilers, the complex's natural gas hot water heaters will also be replaced. Once removed, heated water from the new boilers will be stored in tanks for use by the complex's clients.

"We're thrilled that Fitchburg Housing Authority was able to take advantage of this efficiency rebate program," said Alec O'Meara, Unitil media relations manager. "We hope that the savings that will be seen though making this upgrade will help in the mission to provide additional affordable housing

options for the region."

The Housing Authority established in 1948, oversees the city's public housing and HUD Section 8 programs. Canton Valley's 48 units, which is part of the Authority's state public housing portfolio, were built in the 1950s for city's World War I veterans for about \$300,000, said Bushman.

Bushman also thanked the Authority's Board Chair Linda E. Byrne for authorizing the Authority to move on this great opportunity and the board members, including David Basilio who attended the announcement Wednesday.

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