

# COG ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUE BRIEF

Climate change and energy resources management are major concerns for the National Capital Region. Area local governments have been leaders in developing programs to address these issues, including energy efficiency measures, renewable energy purchasing, and green building policies. Most recently, COG has developed a regional climate change initia-

tive -- one of the first in the country to reduce greenhouse gases locally across an entire metropolitan region. Building on energy efficiency efforts, COG has launched an initiative to reduce regional greenhouse gases and assess how the region may need to adapt to the consequences of climate change.



## COG ACTIVITY

In 2006 COG published a regional strategic energy plan that outlines an energy vision and mission for the National Capital Region. The Strategic Energy Plan identifies initiatives to address the region's need to diversify its energy supply, manage energy demand, mitigate the effects of energy disruption, and enhance environmental quality.

Building on this plan, COG launched two new initiatives:

### Green Building Program

- Several jurisdictions in the region have passed landmark green building policies, and COG has supported this work through technical assistance, peer-exchange, and educational workshops.
- To maximize the effectiveness of local policies, and standardize and strengthen the green building industry, COG is pursuing the development of a regional green building certification program. COG's green building report and recommendations will be available in the summer/fall of 2007.

### Regional Climate Change Strategy

- In 2007 the COG Board of Directors established Climate Change as a leading priority for the organization.
- In January a COG Climate Change Roundtable was held to explore ways in which COG could address this problem.
- In April, the COG Board of Directors appointed a new Climate Change Steering Committee to help guide COG's Climate Change effort, instructing the organization to:
  - Inventory greenhouse gases region-wide.
  - Catalogue greenhouse gas reduction activities currently underway.
  - Establish a regional greenhouse gas reduction target (based on an appropriate baseline).
  - Develop suggestions for best practices to meet the recommended target.
  - Evaluate regional/local climate change effects.
  - Investigate a carbon reduction funding mechanism for the region (e.g. carbon offset program).

## COG SUPPORTS

COG anticipates developing policy recommendations and program priorities in the following areas:

- Development of new funding sources for regional and local climate change reduction and energy efficiency measures across sectors (e.g. the built environment, transportation, land-use, and electricity generation).
- Diversification of energy sources, including increased use of renewable and "green" energy sources.
- Additional research to evaluate national, regional, and local climate change consequences and adaptation techniques.
- The use of alternative fuel-efficient and advance vehicle technologies to enhance energy security and air quality.
- Raising the awareness of energy users to make wise energy choices and create a "culture of conservation."
- Encouraging all sectors to do their part to reduce greenhouse gases.

