

BOARD/COMMISSION RESOLUTION

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

RESOLUTION ON AUSTIN ENERGY GREEN BUILDING AND SAFE BUILDING MATERIALS

WHEREAS, Americans spend as much as 90% of their time indoors; and

WHEREAS, many building materials are made of, or coated with, toxic chemicals, whose harm can be magnified in modern energy-efficient buildings with less ventilation; and

WHEREAS, many of these chemicals have dangerous qualities, as they can be carcinogenic, neurotoxic, developmental and reproductive toxins, asthmagens and respiratory sensitizers, endocrine disrupting chemicals, acutely toxic, and aquatically toxic; and

WHEREAS, since many of these more toxic building products are widely used in apartment and tract-home construction, resulting in more exposure for lower-income and middle-income residents; and

WHEREAS, production of toxic building materials is often energy intensive and also has an adverse air quality and health impacts for communities near the points of production; and

WHEREAS, Austin seeks to lead by example to persuade other local and state governments and programs around the country to avoid harmful chemicals in buildings;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN that the commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the City Manager to:

1. Create a working group of stakeholders, facilitated by Austin Energy staff, to suggest revisions to the single family and multifamily green building point system to strengthen human and environmental protections from harmful substances. The purpose of the working group shall be to: 1) identify and encourage safe building materials; and 2) avoid toxic building materials when necessary.
2. The working group shall strive to include: professionals in the building industry; Austin Energy Green Building staff; environmental experts; health experts; tenant advocates; and members of the Resource Management Commission.
3. The working group shall forward recommendations to the Resource Management Commission of the City of Austin by August 1, 2022.