Welcome to a new era in national focus on high-performance building design: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has established the Commercial High Performance Buildings project. It’s a team-driven public/private partnership established to demonstrate and generate the benefits of buildings that are designed, built and operated to be energy efficient, environmentally sustainable, and cost effective. And it promises to be a beneficial partnership opportunity for architects and building designers.

**PARTNERSHIP GOALS**
The project exists to improve the energy efficiency of commercial buildings, while reducing their impacts on the environment—and at the same time improve the buildings’ utility, comfort, quality, and cost-effectiveness.

Like Energy Design Resources, the Commercial High Performance Buildings project aims to achieve these performance improvements through "whole-building" approaches. For example, improved HVAC efficiency, in combination with higher-performance glazing, could result in smaller and lower-cost equipment, yielding cost and performance benefits in addition to added comfort through reduced glare and noise. These combinations of improvements are the kinds of whole-building strategies that are central to the project goals and to DOE’s broader program interests.

**RESOURCES YOU CAN USE**
The project aims to positively affect the entire process whereby commercial buildings are designed, built and operated. To accomplish this, it will provide or enhance services to the design
community in the following phases of building development:

- **Pre-design:** assist with research that sets building programs and design parameters
- **Design:** assist with building design, detailing and specification, including energy analysis and modeling
- **Commissioning:** assist with commissioning procedures
- **Benchtop testing:** assist with pre-construction proof-of-concept testing and verification
- **Construction:** assist during construction phase
- **Post-occupancy:** assist with building operation and post-occupancy assessments
- **Outreach:** Lessons learned are disseminated throughout the commercial building industry for widespread benefits

**THE TEAM POWER BEHIND THE PROJECT**

Preparation, talent, and teamwork contribute to high performance. Designing high performance, energy-saving buildings is no different. The DOE has learned from such initiatives as the residential Building America program that multi-disciplinary teams combining federal and private-sector skills and resources are very effective at achieving wide-ranging program goals. In this light, its directors have established the Commercial High Performance Buildings project as a voluntary organization of combined talents that contribute to the implementation and demonstration of highly efficient commercial buildings.

The Commercial High Performance Buildings project will provide and orchestrate technical and marketing support for a number of commercial buildings nationwide. A separate expert team will be formed for each building or group of buildings. The team will include building design, construction, management, financing, and other expertise pertinent to that building type and market segment. We encourage program participants to include their utility as part of this team. Other support will be available from local financing and marketing organizations, state energy offices and university research facilities.

A core advisory group will oversee these expert teams and support groups. Core participation includes individuals from the industry sectors that have the greatest impacts on commercial
building design, construction and operation:
- Building owners, developers and managers
- Builders and construction managers
- Architects, engineers, and other design professionals
- HVAC systems, controls, and equipment manufacturers
- Lighting and communications specialists
- Wall and insulation material producers
- Interior environments producers and specialists

An additional group of participants will provide further strategic planning, technical, outreach and other skills, and will include:
- Lenders and investors
- National laboratories
- Media
- Trade associations
- Standards organizations
- Other appropriate sectors

**WHAT’S THE PROJECT STATUS?**
The first series of activities focus on the outreach phase. The Commercial High Performance Buildings project is identifying exemplary commercial buildings around the country that exhibit desired attributes of energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, superior quality and cost effectiveness. Several California buildings (including some Savings By Design competition award winners) are among these outstanding projects. The outreach phase highlights these buildings’ attributes and impacts through media, live presentations and the project Web site at [http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/highperformance/chp/planned_activities.html](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/highperformance/chp/planned_activities.html). *EDR E-News* will keep you posted about the progress of this project and how you can participate.

For more information from DOE about high performance buildings, see [http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/highperformance/](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/highperformance/)