

\$1.9B green investment could create 37,000 jobs

By Andrew Cannarsa

Examiner Staff Writer 9/9/08

[Baltimore Examiner](#)

Peter Van Buren and business partners Frank Lee and Kim Schaefer knew they were onto something when they founded TerraLogos Green Home Services about two years ago.

The Baltimore-based firm inspects area homes and recommends to homeowners solutions that address energy leaks, increase home efficiency and ultimately reduce utility bills.

“We serve homeowners within a 40-mile radius of Baltimore,” said Van Buren, TerraLogos’ director of green energy. “That’s at least 300,000 homes that need our services.”

The increased demand has led to company growth. Van Buren and Lee were the firm’s first two energy inspectors, but Terra Logos has since hired two new inspectors, with another coming on board this month. The company plans to add six more inspectors by next spring.

“We can certainly use the help in getting people trained and involved,” Van Buren said.

TerraLogos isn’t the only green Maryland business poised for expansion. Additional investment in other green companies could create more than 36,700 new jobs in Maryland over the next two years, according to a new University of Massachusetts-Amherst report on the potential of future green jobs.

A U.S. green economic investment of \$100 billion would create 2 million new jobs across the country over the next two years, according to the report. By comparison, the government’s fiscal stimulus plan cost \$168 billion.

Maryland’s share of the \$100 billion investment would total \$1.9 billion and create 36,739 new jobs, reducing the state’s unemployment rate to 3.1 percent in two years from 4.3 percent in June 2008, according to the report.

Most of the new jobs would be in construction and manufacturing, and would produce wages between \$12 and \$16 an hour, said Shannon Darrow, field director at Environment Maryland.

“Solving our energy and environmental problems with an aggressive green recovery program will put more Americans to work and put America on a course to revitalize its economy at a time when many Americans are struggling,” Darrow said.

Civic Works, Baltimore’s nonprofit service corps, already has programs in place that install energy-saving devices in low-income homes, install cool roofs on homes to deflect the sun’s heat, and work to seal home air leaks with foams and other materials, said Dana Stein, the group’s executive director.

“We’re in a number of different communities, and there’s a lot of interest from homeowners on what they can do to reduce consumption,” Stein said. “There’s definitely room to expand.”

Maryland’s green infrastructure

The estimated 36,700 green jobs predicted to be created in Maryland are based on the distribution of more than \$1.9 billion in green public- and private-sector investments:

- \$766 million in energy-efficient building retrofits
- Jobs include electricians, heating/air conditioning installers and carpenters

- \$574 million in wind power, solar power and advanced biofuels
- Jobs include engineers, iron and steel workers, and chemists

- \$383 million in mass transit and freight rail
- Jobs include civil engineers, rail track layers and electricians

- \$191 million in smart grid electrical transmission systems
- Jobs include computer software engineers, electrical engineers and electrical equipment assemblers

Source: Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst

acannarsa@baltimoreexaminer.com