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 **for immediate release**

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Two of Milwaukee Area's Largest Home Builders Partner with Wisconsin ENERGY STAR® Homes Program

MADISON, Wis. (April 19, 2007) – The newest partners in the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program are West Allis, Wis. based Kaerek Homes, Inc. and Brookfield, Wis. based William Ryan Homes. Both builders have made a commitment to construct all of their homes to meet Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program standards; as a result, their homes are estimated to be 25 percent more energy efficient than homes built to Wisconsin's Uniform Dwelling Code.

The Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program is part of Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative. Thanks to the partnership between these builders and the program, Milwaukee area homebuyers can enjoy new homes that integrate the latest in building science technology, resulting in increased comfort, safety, durability and energy efficiency.

"On behalf of Focus on Energy and the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, I want to welcome Kaerek Homes and William Ryan Homes into our program. I also want to commend their dedication to excellence in new home construction," said Greg Nahn, Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program manager. "Because of their efforts, homes built in Milwaukee and the surrounding areas will be some of the most energy efficient, high quality homes in the country."

Kaerek Homes, Inc.

Having constructed more than 5,000 homes, Kaerek Homes, Inc. has been fulfilling the housing needs of Southeastern Wisconsin for more than 45 years. The builder currently builds 230-300 homes a year. While Kaerek Homes, Inc. was aware of the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, it wasn't until recently they decided to take the step towards partnership. According to Jan Francki, executive assistant for Kaerek Homes, the company's decision was based on the opportunity to offer their customers one more advantage to owning a Kaerek home.

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“Kaerek Homes has a strong reputation that we have worked hard to build; in fact, we were recently named the Number One Builder by The Milwaukee Business Journal, for the number of single family residential homes built in 2006. We are proud of our prominent standing, and we are always looking for ways to maintain it; that is why a partnership with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program was a natural fit,” explained Francki. “We strive to improve product quality and added value through our home construction.”

Francki further explained that a visit from a consultant that partners with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program helped them realize the benefits of joining the program. “We work with many types of homebuyers; all clients appreciate having a home that can save them money on energy costs and maintenance, while maintaining a very comfortable home environment,” continued Francki.

Kaerek Homes’ experience with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program has been such a positive one thus far that the builder has decided to offer their past customers, who have built a home in 2006, the standard post-test that is part of the program’s certification process. If it is determined that adjustments need to be made to improve the air tightness of the home, the builder will make the necessary modifications.

“Our goal is to continually improve the way we build homes and to pass that value on to our customers; with the help of the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program we are doing just that,” concluded Francki.

William Ryan Homes

William Ryan Homes builds approximately 1,000 homes nationwide, 125 of those in the Milwaukee area. For several years William Ryan Homes had been testing their homes for energy efficiency through their insulation supplier, and while they were familiar with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program and its superior energy efficient certification process, they faced one major roadblock to participating in the program — wood burning fireplaces.

The builder was close to meeting the requirements to qualify for Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program certification, with the exception of a few things, one of those being wood burning fireplaces. Homes certified under the program must meet air tightness requirements that can’t be met with all wood burning fireplaces. “Over the years the requests for wood burning fireplaces have

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dwindled, and there has been a move towards direct vent fireplaces,” explained Tim O’Brien, division president for William Ryan Homes. “We saw this as an opportunity to finally become a part of the program.”

“It turns out the conversion to Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program certification was an easy one for us,” O’Brien further explained. “We are strong believers of using building science principles and a whole house approach when we build our homes. Working with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program is helping to expand our building expertise; we also like the peace of mind that we get by having a third party with no prejudices involved in the building science process.”

William Ryan Homes sees its partnership with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program as a way to demonstrate and quantify the company’s commitment to building homes that are energy efficient and comfortable. According to O’Brien, this is important to homebuyers, as they are becoming increasingly concerned about their home’s performance due to high energy prices.

“The ENERGY STAR label is continuing to increase in recognition among consumers, so the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program affiliation is allowing us a point of differentiation to attract those consumers,” said O’Brien. “Once they decide to build their home with us, we’re confident they will be satisfied throughout their ownership; our confidence comes not only from our people and our product, but from being a part of the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program.”

To Learn More

“A Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Home helps to lower the cost of living while improving the quality of life for the people who own it,” said Nahn. “The home building practices that are verified by the program result in enhanced comfort, control over indoor air, energy efficiency and a more durable home that will not only ease homeowners’ minds, but also their wallets.”

Builders interested in partnering with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program and consumers interested in finding a builder partner, can visit focusonenergy.com or call (800) 762-7077 for more information.

About the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program

Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes is one of the Focus on Energy Residential Programs. New homes are constructed to meet program standards and are estimated to be 25 percent more energy efficient than homes built to Wisconsin’s Uniform Dwelling Code. To date, the more than 350 builders who have partnered with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program have constructed nearly 7,500 new homes. For information about the program, call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com

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About Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not get completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About Kaerek Homes, Inc.

Contact Kaerek Homes, Inc. for more information (414) 321-5300 or visit kaerekhomes.com.

About William Ryan Homes

Founded in 1992, William Ryan Homes is a privately owned single-family home builder with offices in Milwaukee, Chicago, Tampa, Dallas and Phoenix. Locally building throughout Southeastern Wisconsin, the company is designed with a "Customer First" philosophy. The question, "What could the customer want?" drives their operation. With this commitment, William Ryan Homes provides a quality product, honesty and integrity, open communication, flexible home designs, and respect for customer's time and money throughout the building experience. New home communities include Franklin, Grafton, Johnson Creek, Mukwonago, Oconomowoc, Port Washington, and West Bend. For model hours and directions, please visit WilliamRyanHomes.com or contact a William Ryan Homes representative at (800) 470-RYAN.

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