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Parade of Homes Boasts Models of Energy Efficiency

- Every home in the parade to be certified by Wisconsin ENERGY STAR® Homes Program -

MADISON, Wis. (July 24, 2008) — Focus on Energy is proud to be a sponsor of this year’s Metropolitan Builder Association’s Parade of Homes, taking place Aug. 16 – Sept. 7, 2008 in Muskego’s Belle Chasse subdivision. What’s even more exciting is the fact that every home in the parade is certified by Focus on Energy’s Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program; meaning they were not only built to be beautiful, they were built to manage rising energy costs. These homes are models of design and models of energy efficiency.

“While the homes in the parade are primarily known for featuring the latest in design trends, it is our hope visitors will also pay attention to the building science behind these homes,” said Sue Hanson, program manager for Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes. “Our program worked with the parade’s builders on planning and construction and then tested each home based on a set of proven and effective building standards, specific to Wisconsin’s extreme weather. The end results are great homes that combine enhanced comfort and safety with increased durability and energy efficiency.”

What is the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program?

The Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program and participating builders work together based on the principles of applied building science and the recognition that a home is an integrated and interactive system. This system is designed, built and tested to meet program standards. Homes built under the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program are estimated to be 25 percent more energy efficient than homes built to Wisconsin’s Uniform Dwelling Code.

What makes a home certified by the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program different?

A few of the practices and technologies that contribute to the program’s exceptional performance include tight construction, improved insulation details, tested ventilation and energy efficient heating and cooling equipment.

- **Tight Construction.** Certified Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes feature tighter construction than homes built to Wisconsin's Uniform Dwelling Code. This is due to site visits that address the gaps, holes and framing bypasses that can occur during construction. Tighter construction means reduced air infiltration, which combined with properly installed insulation and tested ventilation, can reduce energy bills and uncomfortable drafts while enhancing the ability to control indoor air quality.
- **Improved Insulation Details.** In addition to setting the standard for building air tightness, the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program establishes guidelines for insulation installation. This combination minimizes voids, gaps, compressions and air movement in and through the insulation, factors that can dramatically decrease performance during the cold winter months. The results are certified homes that are more effectively insulated, maintain warmer surfaces and room temperatures and better assure energy efficiency performance when needed most.
- **Tested Ventilation.** Through the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, homes are also tested for sufficient ventilation. An efficient, well-designed ventilation system is necessary for avoiding damage from moisture and maintaining indoor air quality. Bath fans, kitchen range hoods and central exhaust systems are all tested for capacity and proper installation. This ensures the systems can accommodate the number of occupants and sources of moisture in a home. Homeowners can then control moisture, odors and other irritants while providing fresh air, making homes more pleasant and comfortable.
- **Energy Efficient Heating and Cooling Equipment.** Due to the high standards put in place during the construction of a Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Home, the size of the home's heating and cooling equipment can often be smaller than the equipment needed in a home built to Wisconsin's Uniform Dwelling Code. Using high efficiency heating and cooling equipment that is properly sized for the house can lower utility bills, reduce maintenance problems and eliminate noise.

"It's becoming more evident that new home buyers are placing great importance on energy efficiency, so it is commendable that our participating builders are taking this into account," continued Hanson. "Not only will these energy efficient homes help to shield the owner's from increasing energy costs, they will help to lessen the homeowner's impact on our environment."

To find more examples of how Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes are better built, visit focusonenergy.com/yournewhome or call (800) 762-7077.

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 400 builders who have partnered with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program have constructed more than 9,000 new homes. For information about the program, call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

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 be 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.

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