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Wisconsin ENERGY STAR® Homes Program Celebrates 10,000th Home
- Home signifies importance of energy efficiency, even in historically fractured housing market -

MADISON, Wis. (Dec. 4, 2008) – Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, celebrated the completion of the 10,000th home certified under its Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program during a dedication ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008.

“Despite historically low construction in the new home building industry, we are extremely proud to have reached the completion of the 10,000th Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Home,” said Sue Hanson, Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes program manager. “This milestone demonstrates that building energy efficient homes is a high priority for consumers.”

Hanson went on to praise the builders and consultants who have worked together since 2001 to make the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program successful. “The program has worked hard over the years to build the necessary infrastructure of partners who work together with a set of proven and effective building standards, specific to Wisconsin’s extreme weather,” added Hanson. “Their combined technical expertise during the planning, construction and testing of each home results in a dwelling that combines enhanced comfort with increased durability and energy efficiency.”

Mayor of Monona, Wis., Robb Kahl and his wife Jennifer Kahl, own the 10,000th Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Home. The 4,000 square foot ranch style home was built by Madison, Wis., based Veridian Homes. Along with Hans Hoffman, an independent consultant who partners with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, Veridian Homes worked to ensure the Kahl family’s home was built to be an estimated 25 percent more energy efficient than homes built to Wisconsin’s Uniform Dwelling Code.

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“I was aware that Veridian built homes certified by the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program but didn’t know about the details that went into the certification,” said Kahl. “I was happy to learn about the benefits, especially the savings on energy costs. Initially I thought building an energy efficient home would be dramatically more expensive; however, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that it wasn’t and the minimal extra cost was worth the expense because of the energy cost savings.”

Sound Building Principles

Like all homes built under the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, the Kahl residence is different from other newly built homes in Wisconsin. The main difference is in the attention paid to every detail in the home’s construction. The program and participating builder partners 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. A few of the practices and technologies contributing to the program’s exceptional performance include:

- **Tight Construction.** This is due to site visits designed to address potential 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.** 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 on cold winter nights.
- **Tested Ventilation.** Through the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, homes are also tested for effective ventilation. An efficient, well designed ventilation system is necessary for avoiding damage from moisture and controlling indoor air quality.
- **Energy Efficient Heating and Cooling Equipment.** Due to the high standards 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.

As energy costs and concern for the environment increase, Hanson hopes the Kahl's home will serve as an example to homeowners and builders in Wisconsin. "Building green is on the forefront of many consumers' minds, and it's important to recognize that the biggest component of green building, with the largest long-term impact, has to do with the home's performance and efficiency," continued Hanson.

"We thank Veridian Homes for providing leadership in building superior homes," said Hanson. "We also congratulate the Kahl family for having the foresight to build with Veridian Homes through the program, and wish them many years of happiness in their new home."

To find other builders or consultants who partner with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program, 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 750 builders who have partnered with the Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes Program have constructed 10,000 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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