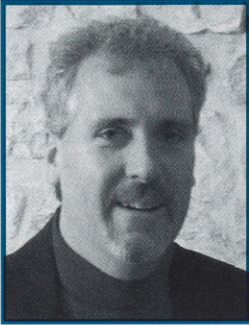


GREEN HOMEBUILDING PROGRAMS NATIONWIDE



By David V. Hartke, AIA, MBA, LEED Certified Designer
Stampfl-Hartke Associates, LLC

As a builder, you may be considering green design, and at the same time, wonder whether green is something more than just another trend. You're not alone. The vast majority of homebuilders question whether they should be the ones to don the pioneer mantle for the good of the

planet. Who can blame them?

The reality is that the pioneering has already been done and now green is becoming a mainstay to many homebuilders across the nation. In fact numerous HBA organizations have developed guidelines that individual builders can follow to achieve High Performance or green status for their product line.

Local Green Programs

Right now there are 22 active green programs aimed at the residential industry, nationwide. Of these programs, nine are sponsored and managed by local HBA's. And many more are currently being implemented. All of the programs are volunteer-based and allow builders to create High Performance homes in various ways. These green building programs basically assign points to a wide variety of design-strategy categories and allow the builder to meet or exceed the requirements within each category. In many cases, if the builder exceeds certain standards, additional points are awarded.

In the end, the builder (or homeowner) can achieve the local green program's certification without having to concentrate on each and every detail. For example, one homebuilder could focus on high performance tactics such as minimizing storm water runoff, tightening the building envelope, and installing high efficiency heating and air conditioning. Under the same program, another builder might concentrate on recyclable products, environmentally safe materials, and reducing construction waste. Both could obtain green certification using very different strategies.

Consistency and Significance

As the trend for HBA's developing regional green homebuilding programs expands, there is the potential that the public may question the validity of any individual program. In order to achieve the appropriate consistency and significance required to support the public's perception, the National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB) has endorsed the development of a standard set of Green Building Guidelines. The actual creator of the standards is the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council (SBIC), an independent, non-profit entity that has coordinated its effort with both the NAHB and the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE).

The resultant publication titled Green Building Guidelines provides a high level of consistency to the design criteria for high performance homes without sacrificing local autonomy. By following the Green Building Guidelines during the creation of their own individual green building program, local HBA's gain a strong, independent credential.

Bringing it Home

The combination of standardization and voluntary compliance provides the green homebuilding movement with a system that can be embraced by small builders and the big nationals as well.

The Bucks-Montgomery HBA now has a clear opportunity to create its own green building program without having to experiment or take chances with unproven concepts. To that end, the HBA is sponsoring a seminar presented by the SBIC that will help explain the Green Building Guidelines publication and illustrate how it can be used to create our own green program. The seminar is scheduled for Wednesday morning, October 6, 2004. The speaker will be Ron Jones, president of Sierra Custom Homes and a previous executive with the NAHB. Look for upcoming details from the HBA.



STAMPFL HARTKE ASSOCIATES, LLC

architecture, engineering
interior design + land planning

2525 Holicong Road, P.O. Box 667, Holicong, PA 18928
215.794.1925 p 215.794.1926 f www.stampflhartke.com