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DOE, National Association of Home Builders Honor Programs
Saving Homeowners \$46 Million in Utility Bills
Programs Demonstrate That New Homes Can Save Energy and Money

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) today honored five voluntary program that have helped build more than 300,000 energy efficient homes, saving consumers throughout the country a total of \$46 million in utility bills annually.

"By using less energy, these efficient homes are reducing air pollution by 108,000 metric tons annually, the equivalent of taking 81,300 cars off the road each year. And, they are built at a cost comparable to that of conventional homes," said Dan Reicher, Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. "Each of these homes will save its owner about \$1,530 in heating and cooling costs over the next 10 years."

"Energy efficiency programs developed by builders, utilities, and other groups are helping us save energy and create value for home buyers," said NAHB President Robert L. Mitchell, a home builder from Rockville Md. "We welcome the recognition that the U.S. Department of Energy is bringing to this five-year effort to develop voluntary, market-driven programs that exceed Model Energy Code requirements without more red tape and regulations."

These voluntary programs have adopted the goals of the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH), a Presidential initiative launched in 1998. PATH's goal is, by 2010, to cut the environmental impact and energy use of new housing by 50 percent over the Model Energy Code, and reduce energy use in 15 million existing homes by 30 percent.

"If all new homes were built to these goals, by 2010 homeowners would save \$2.8 billion annually. The nation would save 400 trillion Btu in energy costs and would cut six million metric tons of carbon emissions annually, the equivalent of taking 450,000 cars off the road each year," added Reicher.

The programs being honored are:

- The E Seal Program, the electric utility industry's national energy efficiency and environmental housing initiative. E Seal, administered by the Edison Electric Institute, has investor-owned, rural cooperative, and municipal utility participants. E Seal certifies electric utility construction programs that exceed the highest nationally recognized energy efficiency and environmental criteria. E Seal also offers unique mortgage and residential loan programs to help finance energy efficiency upgrades to new homes and to improve the efficiency of existing homes.

- The Comfort Home Program, based in Lancaster, PA, a nationally recognized, performance-based energy efficiency program which guarantees buyers of new homes their heating and cooling cost for three years, and their comfort for one year. The program provides state of the art consulting, design, and home testing services to builders in 16 states.
- Energy Star Homes, a joint national DOE/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency program, which collaborates with builders to construct new, highly energy efficient houses with superior indoor air quality and improved occupant comfort.
- The Johns Manville Performance Home Program, a national program based in Denver, which provides builders with a flexible framework to encourage efficiency upgrades, including insulation and other features. The program's computer software helps builders optimize the energy efficiency of their specific designs, and calculates energy and dollar savings to help promote the advantages of an improved design to buyers.
- The Alaska Craftsman Home Program, based in Anchorage, a building industry, financial, and educational institution alliance which uses workshops, publications, and demonstration homes to promote energy efficient and cost-effective home construction throughout Alaska.

"Energy efficient homes offer advantages to the nation overall, not just homeowners," concluded Reicher. "By reducing energy use, these homes will improve the reliability of the nation's electricity supply and reduced the prospect for brownouts, The Department of Energy and the National Association of Home Builders look forward to expanding their energy efficiency programs to include many more builders throughout the country.

The National Association of Home Builders is a Washington-based trade association representing more than 203,000 professionals involved in home building, remodeling, multifamily construction, property management, subcontracting, design, housing finance, building product manufacturing and other aspects of residential and light commercial construction. More information about NAHB and its programs is available at www.nahb.org.

For more information on DOE's energy efficient building program, please visit www.eren.doe.gov/buildings.