

By William Woolery



Holiday Season will Celebrate HB's First "Green Built" Home

If you drive along 21st street between Orange and Pacific Coast Highway this December the usual delight of festive celebration will once again remind us of the spirit of Christmas. This year, however, nestled beneath the strands of sparkling lights and dazzling color will be the first "Green Built" single-family residence in Huntington Beach.

Last February, local and federal officials gathered for a groundbreaking ceremony at 319 21st Street to celebrate the launch of the first "Net Zero Energy" home to be built in Orange County. HB-based homebuilder Living Green Homes Construction and Development held the event to announce its plans for Project 319 and its future plans to build all green homes throughout Southern California.

"We're in recess in Washington right now and while I have time away from my duties there, I took this opportunity to express the need for energy conservation and encourage every member of the community to do their part," said U.S. Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, who characterized the event as a step toward energy independence.

Mayor Debbie Cook, a huge supporter of the green movement, called the project "a good way to spread the message. I applaud their effort to raise the awareness of what they are trying to do and encourage other people to follow that same path."

Living Green Homes Vice President and COO, Jason Scheurer, said that he was surprised at the turnout. "When we heard Congressman Rohrabacher, Huntington Beach Mayor Debbie Cook, members of the city council, Fountain Valley Mayor John Collins, other city officials, and sponsors were attending we knew we had a full blown media event."

Once completed, the company plans to apply for a "GreenPoint Rated" certification - which is a California grown and community-based program that rates homes performing above the standard practices in the state. The GreenPoint Rated program is managed by Build It Green, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting green building in California.

Plans are also in place to showcase the single-family residence and present it for home tours to the general public for up to 90 days after its completion.

"One of the reasons we planned the home tour is there is too much clutter in the marketplace, making it difficult for consumers to fully understand green products, their use and benefit," said Scheurer. "The experience of being face-to-face is an engaging process that will give potential buyers the confidence that energy saving appliances, control systems and building materials have a major impact on their personal lives as well as the environment." The home tour will offer consumers hands-on demonstrations



with qualified manufacturer representatives who have contributed to the project. Featured products include integrated solar panels, ENERGY STAR certified appliances, Forest Stewardship Council-certified wood - harvested from sustainable forests, building materials low in unhealthy volatile organic compounds, a tankless water heater, pervious concrete - which allows water to drain into the ground.

Although energy efficient products and building techniques are not new introductions to the market, there is an apparent trend in the mind of the consumer to reduce energy consumption, enjoy healthier lifestyles and have a positive impact on the environment - which is why so many of the leading manufacturers of energy saving products are participating in Project 319.

It's a win-win for all who participate. Most industry leaders agree it's just a matter of time before the living green concept has a comparative share of the market similar to the organic food industry.

With all the attention and expectation surrounding this project we can look forward to its much-anticipated completion. To learn more about Project 319, please visit the website at www.Living-GreenHomes.com. **HB**

William Woolery is a former Editor-in-Chief of Orange County Magazine and past writing professor at the University of California, Irvine. For more information on the Living Green on 319 project, visit www.Living-GreenHomes.com