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GREEN HOME RECEIVES HIGHEST PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION

May 30, 2011– The Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA) Green Built Gulf Coast (GBGC) program recently announced the first home remodel to receive an ‘Emerald’ certification, the program’s highest designation under the commended National Green Building Standard (NGBS).

The homebuilder, Dewey Hennessee with Olympia Builders, was able to achieve the home’s Emerald level of performance after extensive remodeling, performance testing and inspections, obtaining a 52.1% reduction in energy usage and a 52.2% reduction in water usage. Because of the age of the home, 49 years old, it was in a poor state regarding energy, water efficiency and indoor air quality.

Green Built Gulf Coast is a “green” building program recently released by the GHBA. The program is geared specifically for the unique environmental conditions that define the Texas Gulf Coast area including heat and humidity.

The National Standard provides an accredited criterion for rating the environmental impact of design and construction practices to achieve conformance with specified performance levels of green residential buildings.

In order for a home to achieve Emerald certification status, it must have an established baseline of energy and water efficiency derived from a pre - construction detailed energy audit and a detailed water audit. After construction is completed, new energy and water audits are performed and compared to the pre - construction efficiency. Emerald certified homes demonstrate at least a 50% improvement in efficiency for both energy and water consumption.

The following outlines some of the key components applied in each category. To see the full list of “green” application features per category visit www.greenbuiltgulfcoast.org.

A key factor in the construction process was the use of foam insulation to control the homes air infiltration and exfiltration. The home also underwent extensive design planning strategies to ensure the indoor air quality and the central air conditioning system perform at peak efficiency so the occupants are comfortable, healthy, and have complete control over their home environment while being able to afford the utility bills.

In addition to the insulation, high efficiency windows, doors, and water heating equipment were installed in the home.

On the water side of things, high efficiency toilets, showers and faucets replaced the outdated and leaking inefficient fixtures in the home. Also, a professional landscaper completely renovated the yard landscape and irrigation system which saved over 20, 000 gallons of water per year compared to the poorly operating existing irrigation system.

While all the elements of the home are outstanding by themselves, it takes planning to put them all together as a high performing system.

“It was refreshing to be able to work with a couple committed to doing their part for the environment,” said Hennessee. “We were able to blend the modern eco-sensitive techniques with an older home, and the result is a modern performing home with less of an environmental footprint that will make economic sense for the customer for years to come.”

**Under GBGC, the GHBA has adopted the National Green Building Standard™ ICC 700-2008. The National Green Building Standard™ allows for flexibility allowing for regionally appropriate green building practices. This Standard™ is the first American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-approved residential green building program in the nation and requires strict compliance including third party verification procedures.*

For more information about the GBGC program visit the GHBA website at www.ghba.org or go to www.greenbuiltgulfcoast.org.

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