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News Release

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West Coast's First LEED® for Homes Residence Completed As Showcase for Sustainable Building Design.

Parkdale, OR - It may not be the largest house in Hood River County, but it will be the most efficient. The US Green Building Council has just awarded its first residential LEED (*Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*) Silver certification on the west coast to the just-completed Kelly-Woodford home in this rural town along the Northern flank of Mt. Hood. This home is also certified ENERGY STAR® for the many energy efficient features it contains.

Rather than size, the project goals were to create an example of sustainable design and building, plus long-term durability. The 2,000 square foot home fits its rural neighborhood and its energy efficient systems will conserve or actually give back energy in every season.

The home has a dramatic view of Mt. Hood - a steady reminder to owners Tom Kelly and Barbara Woodford how important their home's footprint will be for the decades ahead. Tom is president of Neil Kelly Company, Portland-based design/build remodelers, custom homebuilders, and general contractor of the Parkdale home. Tom's company also built the first LEED certified commercial structure on the west coast back in 2001.

"For years, we've urged our employees, suppliers and clients to build and remodel in a sustainable manner. Barbara and I have always wanted to build a showcase for sustainable design, construction and living," noted Kelly, who also "walks the walk" by driving a bio-diesel fueled car. "We believe this is the future of home building."

While primarily a family retreat, the Kelly-Woodford home will be available to Neil Kelly Company employees half the year as a benefit, so they can enjoy the natural setting and innovative project first-hand. "I can't imagine a nicer spot for our employees and their families to relax and recharge," said Kelly. "This has been a real labor of love, with hundreds of employee volunteer hours contributed to the completion of this job."

"When we sat down with Liz Olberding, our niece and the designer, we agreed this home was to offer the smartest and lightest footprint environmentally and also use as many sustainable materials as possible," noted Kelly. Olberding, a University of Oregon architecture graduate, is affiliated with an Anchorage architectural firm.

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The three-bedroom, two-bath home was planned with very specific environmental goals and strategies. It is a “net-zero energy use” home, meaning over the course of a year, its photovoltaic panels will track the sun and are projected to generate more electricity than the home will consume. The panels will generate power every day, but in winter, its power mix will rely more on the local utility; in summer it will generate and return excess power to the grid.

Passive solar design reduces heating and cooling requirements by use of south-facing windows. Natural ventilation and proper orientation will take advantage of local wind patterns and the sun’s celestial orientation.

Photovoltaic panels provide power to heat the water used in the radiant floor, creating a constant heat source for the home. Foundations and the external walls are constructed with a cement/wood fiber building block that when filled with rebar and concrete provide a durable, energy efficient, and quiet structure. The blocks contain mineral wool for insulation.

Staggered stud walls with spray-in foam insulation comprise the second story walls and nearly foot-thick structural insulated panels (SIP’s) used for the roof will help keep winter’s chill and summer heat at bay. Super efficient Marvin Integrity windows are strategically placed to capture the Mt. Hood view, but also keep the interior temperature constant. Rounding up the energy efficient features are ENERGY STAR® rated appliances, a 16 SEER heat pump, and compact fluorescent lighting help keep operational costs to a minimum.

Due to the nature of materials constructing the home, it has a very “tight” shell. Although this is ideal for energy conservation, internal air can become stale and “unhealthy” for occupants. To eliminate this issue, two Sterling energy recovery ventilators (ERV’s) are installed to exhaust the internal air while simultaneously pulling in and preconditioning the fresh air. A filtration system traps air-borne particles from entering and polluting the home during the air exchange. Internal finishes from American Clay Plaster and Rhodda Paint’s Green Sealed certified Horizon line along with Yolo Colorhouse paint expel little to no VOC’s (volatile organic compounds) adding to this home’s healthier indoor air qualities.

Framing lumber from Warm Springs Forest Products and laminated beams from American Laminators using the same lumber are all FSC-certified, meaning they come from sustainably-grown and harvested forests. The concrete has a high percentage of fly ash, a waste product from coal fired electrical generation plants, offering strength and reducing the need for energy-hungry cement production. The shingle-look steel roof contains 25-30% recycled steel. Wood trim has come from reclaimed industrial uses such as pilings and hundred-year-old sunken logs harvested from the bottom of the Columbia River.

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The Neil Kelly designed kitchen and bath cabinets are made of wheat board and reclaimed clear vertical grain Douglas fir from decades-old vinegar vats, as well as sunken logs. The counter tops use two different products made of 75% recycled glass and concrete, as well as 50% recycled post consumer paper and fly ash cement. Select door panels are made of recycled post-harvest sorghum stalks.

During construction, the Neil Kelly Co. builders and their subcontractors “walked lightly” on the land by reducing and recycling construction waste, controlling soil erosion with hay bales and sourcing materials locally to limit transportation impacts. When they did have to deliver materials from a distance, Neil Kelly’s bio-diesel-fueled truck did the job.

Earth Advantage[®], LEED for Homes pilot program provider, guided and documented the Kelly-Woodford project through the certification process. “This home contains some of the most innovative energy efficient products and sustainable materials you can find”, says Randy Hansell, Earth Advantage LEED for Homes project manager. He adds, “LEED-H raises the bar in green residential construction and the Kelly-Woodford home exemplifies this type of certification program. This home will last for generations to come and will continue to perform well year after year.”

“When our family, friends and employees enjoy their time here, we want them to know they are living with nature, not in competition with it,” said Kelly.

To view this LEED for Homes silver certification project, the home will be open to the general public Saturday, July 29th, from 3pm to 6pm located at 8685 Clear Creek Rd., Parkdale, Oregon. To learn more about LEED certified homes, please visit www.usgbc.org.

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Earth Advantage, Inc., a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, is a leader in the sustainable building industry in the Pacific Northwest. At a minimum, Earth Advantage homes are designed to use 15 percent less energy than houses built to standard code practices. Earth Advantage homes adopt the philosophy of holistic sustainability (4-pillar approach) and are accordingly certified for energy efficiency, healthier indoor air, resource efficiency and environmental responsibility. The organization has the ability to certify homes as Earth Advantage (Gold and Platinum levels exist too), ENERGY STAR, or LEED for Homes. For more information, visit www.earthadvantage.org.