



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HOME BUILDERS ANNOUNCE STATEWIDE "GREEN BUILDING" PROGRAM FOR SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES

EarthCraft House™ Program to be Broadly Introduced

RICHMOND, September 21, 2006

Governor Timothy M. Kaine today helped launch an initiative that provides Virginia homebuyers with a one-stop source for homes that save money on energy and utility bills, provide excellent indoor air quality, are durable, and feature environmentally friendly products.

With the introduction of the EarthCraft House Single Family Program, these certified energy efficient homes will become increasingly available in the Commonwealth. This program, which provides voluntary Green Building guidelines for builders in Virginia, is being launched as of September 21, 2006. Partners in the program include the Home Builders Association of Virginia (HBAV), Virginia Sustainable Building Network (VSBN) and Southface Energy Institute. Supporters of the program include the U. S. Department of Energy Building America Program; the Energy Division, Virginia Division of Mines, Minerals and Energy and additional private sponsors.

"I am pleased that Virginia homebuilders are eager to offer homes that lessen the negative impact on our environment," Governor Kaine said. "This initiative will teach homeowners, home builders, and commercial design and construction professionals ways they can save energy and water, and preserve our environment."

"The Home Builders Association of Virginia supports this program because EarthCraft House allows builders great flexibility in achieving environmental performance," said Anthony Clatterback, President of the HBAV. "Adoption of this program supports builders' ability to deliver homes that lessen their impact on the environment and provide homebuyers with independently inspected and certified homes that are high-performance, durable and resource-efficient."

The program rollout will be very aggressive to provide the public with EarthCraft homes statewide as quickly as possible. Initial areas for the program roll out this fall will include the Charlottesville area, working with the Blue Ridge Home Builders Association, and the Roanoke area, working with the Roanoke Regional Home Builders Association. A second tier of roll outs will take place in the Spring of 2007 and will include the Richmond and Southside areas, the New River Valley area, Shenandoah Valley, and the Peninsula home builders. The program will continue to be introduced into new markets each quarter until the entire state receives service.

VSBN will administer the EarthCraft House Single Family Program in Virginia, with Charles B. Bowles of The Energy Consortium serving as the program's technical advisor. To qualify for this program, a builder must be a member of their local association, register with the national program, and complete a training course. Each new home is required to pass a final inspection before being certified as an EarthCraft House. The inspection is based on a flexible point system that requires a minimum of 150 points for a house to be certified in the following areas: site planning; energy efficient techniques and equipment; resource efficient design and materials; waste management; indoor air quality; water conservation; home buyer education; and builder operations.

Any size and type of new home can be an EarthCraft House. Builders and home buyers have the freedom to select which measures in the program checklist are best suited for the home they are constructing. The EarthCraft House Program promises to deliver to the Commonwealth a winning combination of utility cost savings, good craftsmanship and sensible environmental stewardship through an easily recognizable program.

The EarthCraft program is also available for multifamily housing in Virginia and is administered by EarthCraft Virginia, a non-profit subsidiary of the Virginia Community Development Corporation. Approximately 800 units in nineteen developments are in the process of obtaining EarthCraft Multifamily Certification, demonstrating that this effort will serve a variety of housing types and demographics. The Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) has included EarthCraft as one of the approved programs for the multifamily housing developments financed by the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, which they administer for the Commonwealth.

About the Home Builders Association of Virginia (HBAV)

The Home Builders Association of Virginia ("HBAV") is a statewide trade association whose membership includes home builders and firms that provide products and services to the housing industry. It is affiliated with seventeen local associations in the Commonwealth and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). The Association is committed to interacting with the Executive, Legislative, and Regulatory agencies of Virginia's state government, to offer members in local associations those services which can best be provided on a statewide basis, and to disseminate information concerning the building industry. HBAV has nearly 6,000 member firms and is governed by a Board of Directors, which meets four times a year. HBAV currently maintains offices in Richmond, Virginia. For more information, visit the HBAV at www.hbav.com.

About Virginia Sustainable Building Network

Virginia Sustainable Building Network (VSBN) is the only statewide organization that brings together a diverse leadership with the mission of promoting environmentally sound building practices in Virginia. VSBN was incorporated as a non-profit (501-c-3) organization in 1995 to change the way homes; buildings and communities are built in the Commonwealth. To accomplish its mission, VSBN provides workshops and technical training, regional and state-wide conferences, and Green Building resources for members of the design and construction industry, local and state government, private building owners, school systems and affordable housing organizations. VSBN has developed a constantly expanding information clearinghouse and resource directory; and it serves as a mid-Atlantic regional networking organization. For more information on VSBN, visit www.vsbnet.org.

About EarthCraft House Program

EarthCraft House is a program the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association developed through a partnership with Southface Energy Institute, government and industry leaders. EarthCraft House is a voluntary green building program that serves as a blueprint for healthy, comfortable homes that reduce utility bills and protect the environment. Over 3,000 homes have been certified through the EarthCraft House program to date. For more information, visit EarthCraft House at www.earthcrafthouse.org.

About Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association

Founded in 1945 by a group of builders looking for an organization to serve their interests and needs within the homebuilding industry, the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association (HBA) is a not-for-profit professional trade association dedicated to promoting, protecting and preserving the homebuilding industry as a viable economic force in the Atlanta area. The HBA is one of more than 800 local homebuilder

associations throughout the U.S. and is affiliated with the Home Builders Association of Georgia and the National Association of Home Builders. With approximately 3,800 members, the HBA is the second largest local homebuilders association in the U.S. and represents the most active residential building market in the country for the last 14 consecutive years. For more information, visit Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association at www.atlantahomebuilders.com

About Southface

Since 1978, Southface has encouraged responsible solutions for environmental living. Driven by the Southeast's growing need to save energy and water and preserve our natural resources, Southface has successfully fostered unique partnerships with public, private and nonprofit organizations. Southface programs and publications reach design and construction professionals, homeowners, government officials and others to promote sustainable homes, workplaces and communities through education, research, advocacy and technical assistance. For more information, visit Southface at www.southface.org

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