



# Media Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FIRESIDE HOME CONSTRUCTION RECEIVES THE FIRST “BUILT GREEN HOUSE CERTIFICATE” IN WASHTENAW COUNTY**

**ANN ARBOR, July 12, 2005** -- Fireside Home Construction recently received the first Built Green House certificate from the Home Builders Association of Washtenaw County (HBAWC). The certificate honors builders, remodelers, trade contractors and others in the building industry that implement green building practices without compromising the quality of the building environment.

The first Built Green House certificate was presented to Fireside for its model 7,000 square foot English County timber-frame style home located at 5822 North Territorial Road in Dexter. The home incorporates a variety of products, materials and techniques that makes it energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

“At Fireside, we understand that our precious Earth has limited resources,” says Bob Burnside, president and owner of Fireside Home Construction. “We feel obligated to preserve our environment for our children, family and others. It’s a personal belief and conviction. In addition, most green building principles result in lower energy bills, and that’s something everyone can appreciate.”

#### **Built Green House Certificate Point System**

To earn a Built Green House Certificate, Fireside had to meet certain criteria, or energy efficiency points, under a Partnership Agreement through the HBAWC. Applicants, like Fireside, must receive a minimum of 120 points. Points are

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earned in the areas of land use, water efficiency, roofing, framing, decking, foundation, appliances, lighting, design efficiency, waste management, and indoor air quality. The Fireside home far exceeded the minimum point requirement, earning 189 points. The home performed well in the areas of water efficiency, framing, foundation, appliances and indoor air quality.

### **EPA ENERGY STAR RATING**

A majority of the points under the Built Green House program come from meeting the requirements of the EPA's ENERGY STAR home efficiency rating system. This is a uniform rating system used for evaluating the overall energy efficiency of a residential dwelling. A certified inspector looks at the home and calculates its performance based on the heating and cooling systems, ventilation system, air filtration and air leakage into the house, and the quality of items such as doors, windows, insulation, mechanical systems and solar orientation. This information is then analyzed to determine the overall efficiency of the house. Homes that receive a rating of 86.0 points or higher are considered ENERGY STAR compliant homes. Homes with more than 90 points are considered Extremely Efficient and receive a Five Star® Plus rating, the highest possible rating.

Under the HBAWC Built Green House Certificate program, Fireside's score was boosted significantly because the home recently received an EPA Five Star® Plus Energy rating. In fact, Fireside's North Territorial home has a 90.3 energy rating, a number that is achieved by very few homes.

### **Geothermal Heating and Cooling System**

One reason for the home's high energy efficiency is the geothermal heating and cooling system installed in the home. The Fireside home has a WaterFurnace Premier E System installed by Michigan Energy Services. Better known as Geothermal heating and cooling, the system uses the earth's soil to heat and cool the home.

In Michigan, the earth's temperature remains a constant 52 degrees just below the frost line, which is approximately four feet below grade. Plastic pipes are buried in the ground at about six feet deep and are filled with water and an antifreeze solution. This solution runs through pipes circulating between the furnace inside the house to the earth just outside. The pipes absorb heat from the earth outside and send it back to the furnace where the heat is compressed to a higher temperature and distributed into the home's heating system. The process is then reversed in the summer months to provide air conditioning.

A geothermal system also significantly reduces a home's energy bills. In the Fireside home, the average heating, cooling and hot water bill averages \$58 per month. This compares to a propane furnace at \$320 per month, or \$197 a month for a natural gas furnace in the same house.

"We place a great emphasis on Green Building principles and continue to seek and learn about new technology and materials in order to build the highest quality and most energy efficient homes possible," says Burnside. "The HBAWC program is a wonderful program and we hope that others in the industry become more aware of the wisdom and cost savings of building a Built Green Home."

#### **About Fireside Home Construction**

Fireside Home Construction, based in Dexter, builds premium quality timber-frame homes, custom homes and provides remodeling services for customers throughout southeast Michigan who seek high quality, energy efficient and durable housing. The company focuses on respecting the environment by using "green building" technologies. Fireside maintains a high reputation in the marketplace by providing personal attention to each client, achieving complete customer satisfaction and providing enduring value to the homeowner. President Bob Burnside has been building custom homes for more than a decade. The company can be reached at (734) 426-4353, or (810) 499-2120 and viewed on the web at [www.Firesidehomeconstruction.com](http://www.Firesidehomeconstruction.com).

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