



Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy

## DOE Zero Energy Ready Home

### **Zero Energy Ready Home Newsletter:**

### **December 2015**

**A Note From Sam Rashkin:**

### **Why Buy a Zero Energy Ready Home...Stay Tuned**

There are endless consumer marketing messages promoting high-performance homes. Most of these are based on the usual litany of benefits: efficiency, comfort, health, and durability. Without a doubt they are all important, but are they emotional? Among these, health is probably the closest to an emotional consumer appeal, but it's difficult to leverage because there are no reliable metrics or absolute promises that can be made. There are no statements promising better health that will get past your attorney. So here we are trying to convey the benefits of Zero Energy Ready Home and basically selling more of the same. More efficiency, comfort, health, and durability where 'more' just means another layer of ambiguity. Thus, the heavy lift [selling Zero Energy Ready Homes.](#)

Now the gloves are off and it's time to find the most powerful emotional consumer message we can consistently and accurately promise. That's what the Zero Energy Ready Homes team is attempting to do. What is this new message? Here it is:

***When the most educated housing experts are polled, they unanimously would choose to buy a Zero Energy Ready Home.***

This finding is based on an informal survey with hundreds of leading building science experts, HERS raters, high-performance home builders, architects, engineers, program managers, and researchers involved in high-performance homes. At presentations all across the

country, we ask our audiences which of three identically designed homes, side-by-side-by-side, they would choose. A 2009 IECC minimum code home; a home built to ENERGY STAR Version 3 requirements for a \$5,000 premium, or a home built to Zero Energy Ready Home requirements built for a \$10,000 premium. Virtually 100% of them choose the Zero Energy Ready Home. Together, they represent the most expert group of homebuyers that can be assembled.

In other words, if homebuyers want to act in their best self-interest and get the home experts would choose, all they have to do is look for the Zero Energy Ready Home label. The risk of not getting it right is a big emotional play, especially since buying a home is often the largest purchase of a lifetime. This is the driving theme behind our new consumer campaign. We need American homebuyers to understand the superior homeownership experience that comes with a Zero Energy Ready Home, why it's the choice of the experts, and that it is available to them today!

This past summer we launched the [Tour of Zero](#), a national campaign providing Americans an inside look at Zero Energy Ready Homes across the country. Supporting this exciting, new resource with effective, emotionally appealing marketing messages will help increase homebuyer awareness and interest in Zero Energy Ready Homes that live better, work better, and last better. Stay tuned over the next few months as the Zero Energy Ready Home team reveals the details and implementation plans for this exciting consumer campaign.

## **Your New Best Friend Just Got Better...Are You Taking Advantage?**

Many of you have heard me refer to the [Building America Solution Center](#) (BASC) as your new best friend if you have anything to do with high-performance homes. That's because it provides a revolutionary system for accessing content you need to apply proven innovations. It's easy to use and incredibly fast in finding just what you need. It's customizable so you can create as many bundles of information as you need. It's constantly up-to-date because it's not fixed content, but constantly improved with new information from the Building America program and outside stakeholders. And it's mobile with both Android and Apple applications! So what's new?

DOE just added a new Sales Tool to the BASC that enables users to prepare one-page fact sheets listing all the innovations relative to six individual homebuyer experiences:

- Healthful Environment
- Enhanced Comfort
- Advanced Technology
- Ultra-Efficient
- Quality Built
- Durability

Like the core BASC content, this sales tool is easy to use and an important resource for prominently featuring the benefits of a high-performance home. Now it's time for you to take advantage. [Visit the BASC today!](#)

***The Zero Energy Ready Home team would like to wish you all a safe and happy holiday! 2015 has been very successful and we expect 2016 to be even better!***

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