

## Residential Science Resources, LLC Bi-Monthly Newsletter

### Did you know?

- Energy Star Homes are typically 20-30% more efficient than standard homes
- An Energy Star Home can keep 4,500 lbs of greenhouse gasses out of the atmosphere each year
- Energy Star Qualified Lighting uses 75% less energy than standard lighting and lasts up to 10 times longer

Courtesy of [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

### New Tax Credit for 1st Time Home Buyers

First time home buyers may qualify for a tax credit of up to \$7,500. Married taxpayers that earn up to \$150,000, and single buyers with incomes up to \$75,000 qualify for the full tax credit. The credit is available for homes purchased after April 9, 2008 and before July 1, 2009. For more information, homebuyers can go to :  
[www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com](http://www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com).

### Unraveling the Mystery of Green Building Programs

Green building programs encourage a practical, whole systems approach through design and building techniques to minimize environmental impact, reduce energy consumption, contribute to the health of occupants, and utilize resources responsibly.

Over the past several years, the green building movement has gained tremendous momentum. The Wall Street Journal recently named green building as one of the top 10 trends in architecture. There are currently over 80 green building programs across the United States, many of them serve local or regional areas. Information follows about NAHB Green and LEED, which are national programs.



Green building programs help meet rapidly growing consumer demand for healthy, energy efficient homes. By participating in a green building program, a

builder can differentiate themselves from competitors, enhance sales, and potentially qualify for financial incentives like rebates and tax deductions/credits.

### Nationwide Green Building Certification Program

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) announced their new green home certification program, NAHB Green. This is a national initiative that will help its members move the practice of green building into the mainstream. The National Green Building Program offers several tools to help builders and remodelers learn how to build green and the benefits of doing so.



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### What's Up with Tax Credits?

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 provides tax credits of up to \$2000 to eligible contractors for the construction of qualified new energy efficient homes.

The legislation was extended once and is due to expire December 31, 2008. The Clean Energy Tax Stimulus Act of 2008 is a bipartisan effort that would extend incen-



tives through 2009 in many areas of energy efficiency, including tax deductions for home builders. It is encouraging that both parties agree on the need, but there is disagreement on how to pay for the program. We will keep you posted on developments.

If you have not received your tax credit forms from RSR that you expect, please call us at 651-994-1234.

## Minnesota GreenStar Welcomes New Director

Minnesota GreenStar Certified Homes and Remodeling has hired Mike Williams as its new Executive Director. Mike's detailed knowledge of residential construction practices along with his wide-ranging background in senior management and leadership makes him an excellent fit for the position. Congratulations, Mike! Look for MN GreenStar in the fall Parade of Homes.



## Contact Us

Residential Science Resources publishes this newsletter bi-monthly for people interested in building science and related news. If you have any comments about this newsletter or suggestions/topics you would like to see for future issues, please contact us at [info@residentialscience.com](mailto:info@residentialscience.com) or call our office at 651-994-1234. To unsubscribe from this newsletter, click reply and put the word "Unsubscribe" in the subject line, and we will remove your name from the list.

## Xcel Energy Supports Energy Efficient Building



If you are building a home in Xcel Energy service territory, you may qualify for one of their no cost *Energy Star Homes* programs listed below. Participation in these programs improves your product, helping you sell more homes and your home may qualify for Energy Star certification.

In Xcel's Energy Star Homes Gas Program, all site walks completed by Residential Science Resources are paid for by Xcel Energy, with no cost to the builder.

For the Energy Star Homes Electric Program, a \$500 rebate is awarded to the builder (or whoever the builder designates) for meeting the program requirements.

### Energy Star Homes Gas Program Requirements:

- Home must be in Xcel gas territory
- 92% AFUE gas furnace
- .62 EF power vented water heater
- Mechanical ventilation; HRV or

dedicated fans in kitchen and bath

- Programmable thermostat
- Air tightness standards compliance



Image Courtesy of Xcel Energy .com

### Energy Star Homes Electric Program Requirements:

(\$500 rebate)

- ECM or variable speed furnace motor (also known as DC drive)
- 3 Energy Star appliances; clothes washer, dishwasher, refrigerator
- 20 Energy Star light fixtures or compact fluorescent bulbs

To learn more about these programs, please contact us at 651-994-1234 or email us at [info@residentialscience.com](mailto:info@residentialscience.com).

### *Unraveling the Mystery of Green Building Programs, cont.*

RSR's own Rick Wheeler and Don Williams have been recently trained and approved as verifiers for the program. For more information go to [www.nahbgreen.org](http://www.nahbgreen.org).

### LEED

The Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) rating system provides a set of standards for environmentally sustainable building and offers

3 levels of certification. It was developed by the US Green Building Council to establish a common standard for green building, promote whole building design practices, raise consumer awareness, make sustainable building more competitive, and recognize environmental leadership in the building industry. The LEED for Homes Rating System can be downloaded from the USGBC website, [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).



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