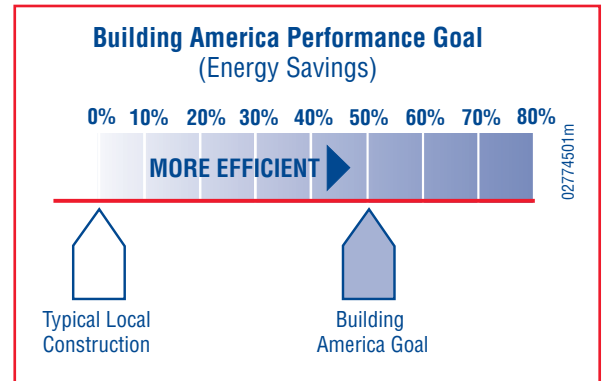


## Whole-House Approach Benefits Builders, Buyers, and the Environment

### The Program

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Building America Program is reengineering the American home for energy efficiency and affordability. Building America works with the residential building industry to develop and implement innovative building processes and technologies — innovations that save builders and homeowners millions of dollars in construction and energy costs. This industry-led, cost-shared partnership program aims to:

-  Reduce energy use by 50% and reduce construction time and waste
-  Improve indoor air quality and comfort
-  Encourage a systems engineering approach for design and construction of new homes
-  Accelerate the development and adoption of high performance in production housing.



A multi-year goal of Building America is to **reduce energy use** by an average of 50% compared to typical local construction.



Warren Gretz, NREL/PIX08743

**Prefabricated wall panels**  
await assembly at the Meadow View community in Longmont, Colorado. McStain Enterprises is the builder partner.

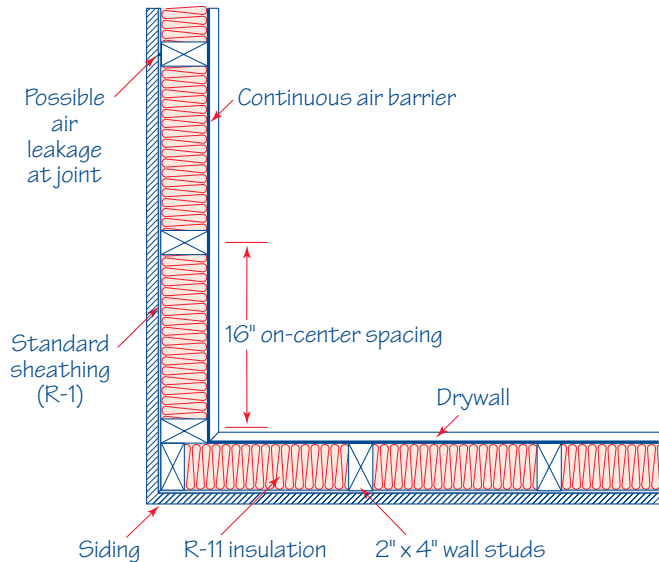


Warren Gretz, NREL/PIX08742

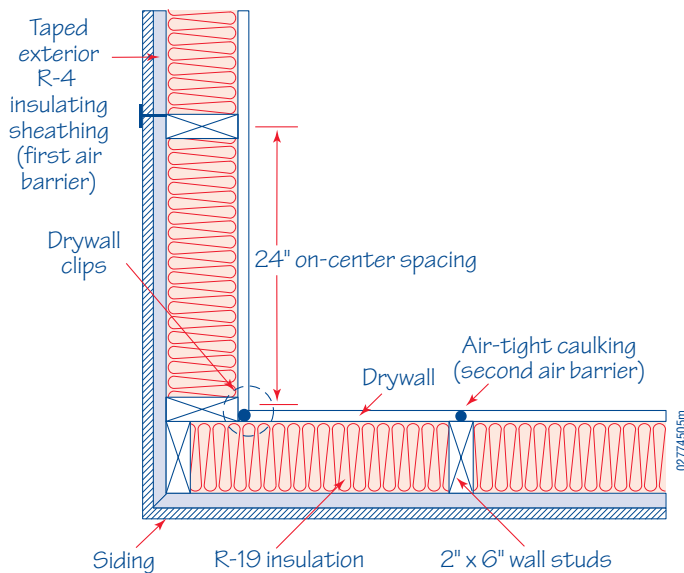


## Examples of Building America Framing and Air Tightness Improvements in a Cold Climate

### Standard Wall Construction



### Advanced Wall Construction



The whole-house approach often uses **advanced framing** and a **double air barrier** to improve insulation and air tightness in cold climates.

## The Whole-House Approach

The teams design houses from the ground up, considering the interaction between the building envelope, mechanical systems, landscaping, neighboring houses, orientation, climate, and other factors. This approach enables the teams to incorporate energy-saving strategies at little or no extra cost. Examples of innovative design improvements that result from this systems-engineering approach include:



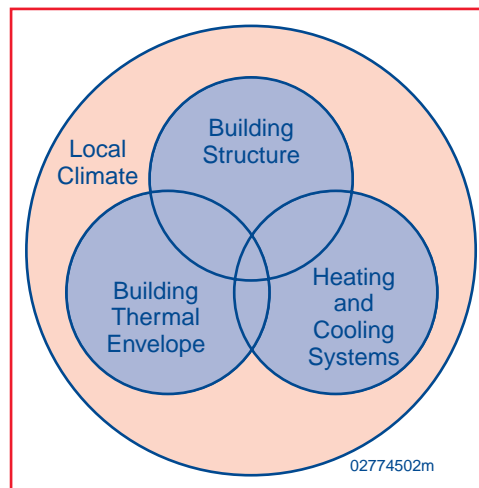
**Advanced framing systems.** By using 2x6 studs on 24-inch spacing instead of the more common 2x4 studs on 16-inch spacing, the builder greatly improves the insulating value of the walls and reduces labor and lumber required to assemble the framing. Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) and other innovative wall systems may also be used to create an airtight, highly insulating wall construction.



**Integrated envelope sealing package.** Combinations of taped sheathing systems, air-tight caulking of drywall, and better workmanship lead to lower air infiltration rates and reduce heating and cooling loads on mechanical systems. Mechanical ventilation is often added to ensure adequate fresh air for building occupants.



**Energy-efficient windows.** Low-emissivity coatings and vinyl frames provide much higher levels of thermal insulation than standard windows with clear glass and aluminum frames. In hot climates, an additional spectrally selective coating may be added to reduce the amount of solar heat entering the house. Exterior shading and house orientation can also be used to control solar gains.



Using a **whole-house approach**, Building America considers performance and interactions of all building systems.

02774502m

## One Example of Building America Cost Trade-offs in Hot-Dry Climate

Standard Practice	Building America	Cost Impact*
Roof vents	Unvented roof	- \$250
Uninsulated roof deck	Insulated roof deck	+ \$700
2x4 framing, 16-inch spacing	2x6 advanced framing, 24-inch spacing	- \$250
Clear glass windows	Low-e, spectrally selective windows	+ \$500
4-ton air conditioner	2-ton air conditioner	- \$1000
Natural ventilation	Controlled ventilation	+ \$100
Total cost of upgrades		- \$200

\* Estimated costs for production builders. Actual costs vary depending on specific features and supplier discounts. (Negative indicates cost savings, positive indicates additional costs.)



**Optimally sized mechanical systems.** Significant reductions in heating and cooling loads allow the installation of smaller, more efficient heating and cooling systems. Mechanical systems with capacities more closely matched to actual loads also provide greater comfort.



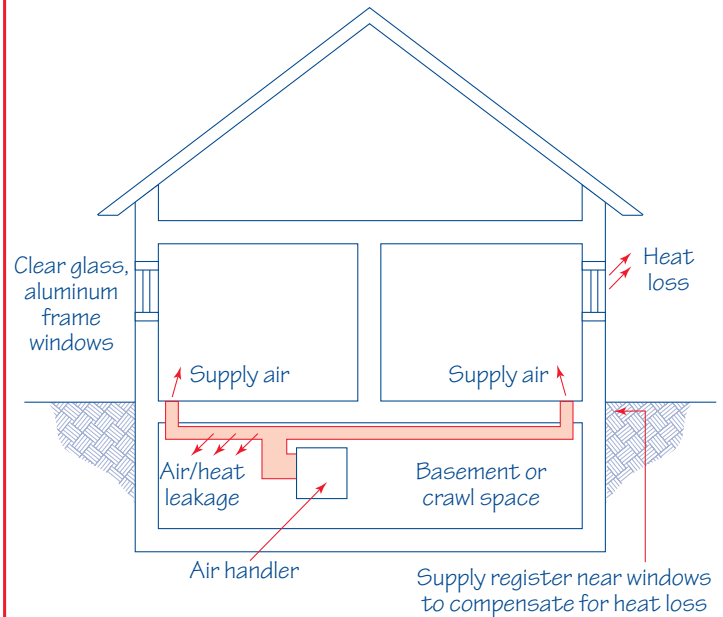
**Ductwork improvements.** Heating and cooling ducts can be moved into conditioned space from the attic or basement, which reduces heat loss to or from the outside environment. Better duct sealing helps prevent the loss of conditioned air. Centrally located heating and cooling systems also lead to shorter supply and return duct runs, lowering construction cost and further reducing air leakage. The addition of return air transfers enhance comfort and minimize negative pressures that can cause moisture problems in humid climates.



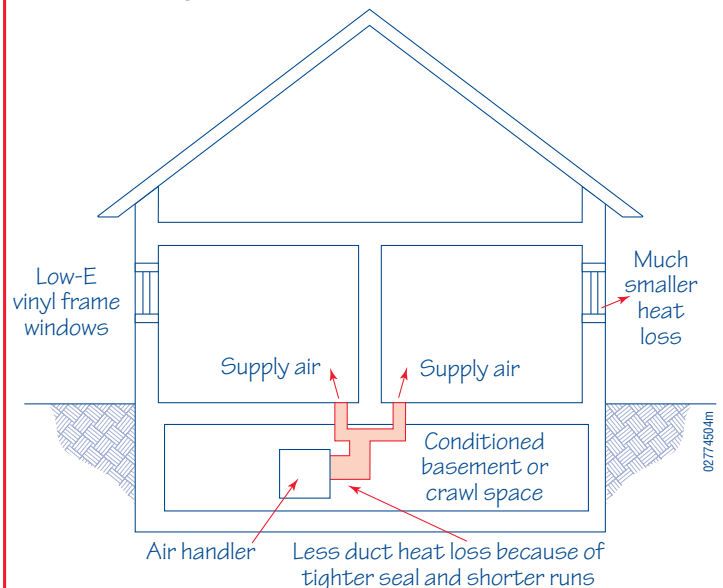
**Factory construction.** Factory-made modules may reduce construction time and costs, and may also improve energy and resource efficiency. Better quality assurance and higher productivity may occur under factory conditions with a controlled environment, leading to tighter building envelopes and less wasted material.

## Examples of Building America Window and Ductwork Improvements in a Cold Climate

### Inefficient Windows and High-Loss Ductwork



### Energy-Efficient Windows and Ductwork



**Windows and air ducts** are frequently major contributors to heat loss in a home. Energy-efficient windows allow the use of shorter ducts that are easier to seal and less expensive to install.

# Building America Industry Teams

## The Participants

Building America's systems engineering approach unites segments of the building industry that have traditionally worked independently of one another. It forms teams of architects, engineers, builders, equipment manufacturers, material suppliers, community planners, mortgage lenders, and contractor trades. There are five teams comprising more than 150 different companies.

### Building Science Consortium (BSC)

*Team Leader:* Building Science Corporation

*Key Industry Partners:*

Artistic Homes  
Ashland Construction  
Centex Homes  
DEC Therma-Stor  
Del Webb  
Dow Chemical  
Greenbuilt Homes  
Habitat for Humanity  
Hans Hagen Homes  
Ideal Homes  
Investec  
John Laing Homes  
Kaufman and Broad  
The Lee Group  
PPG  
Pulte Homes  
RPM Homes  
Southface Energy Institute  
Sturbridge Construction  
Town & Country Homes  
U.S. Green Fiber

### Consortium for Advanced Residential Buildings (CARB)

*Team Leaders:* Steven Winter Associates

*Key Industry Partners:*

Andersen Windows  
Beazer Homes  
Cambridge Homes  
Champion Home Builders  
Crosswinds Communities  
Del Webb  
Honeywell  
ITW  
McStain Enterprises  
Mercedes Homes  
Mitchell Homes  
Owens Corning  
Ryan Homes  
Simpson Strong-Tie  
US Steel  
Weyerhaeuser  
Whirlpool  
York

### Integrated Building and Construction Solutions (IBACOS)

*Team Leader:* IBACOS, Inc.

*Key Industry Partners:*

Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann  
Carrier  
Civano Development Corporation  
The Estridge Companies  
Farm Homes  
Fortis Homes  
GE Appliances  
GE Plastics  
Hedgewood Properties  
John Wieland Homes  
Kohler  
Medallion Homes  
Montgomery & Rust  
Morrison Homes  
New Era  
Owens Corning  
Playa Vista  
Pulte Homes  
US Gypsum  
U.S. Army  
Venture Homes

### Hickory Consortium

*Team Leader:* Hickory Corporation

*Key Industry Partners:*

Acorn Laboratories  
Building Science Engineering  
Cardinal Homes  
Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems  
Coachman Industries/All American Homes  
Epoch  
Excel Homes/Avis America  
Hampton Architect  
Oaktree Development  
Pella Windows  
Tamarack Technologies  
University of Central Florida

### Industrialized Housing Partnership

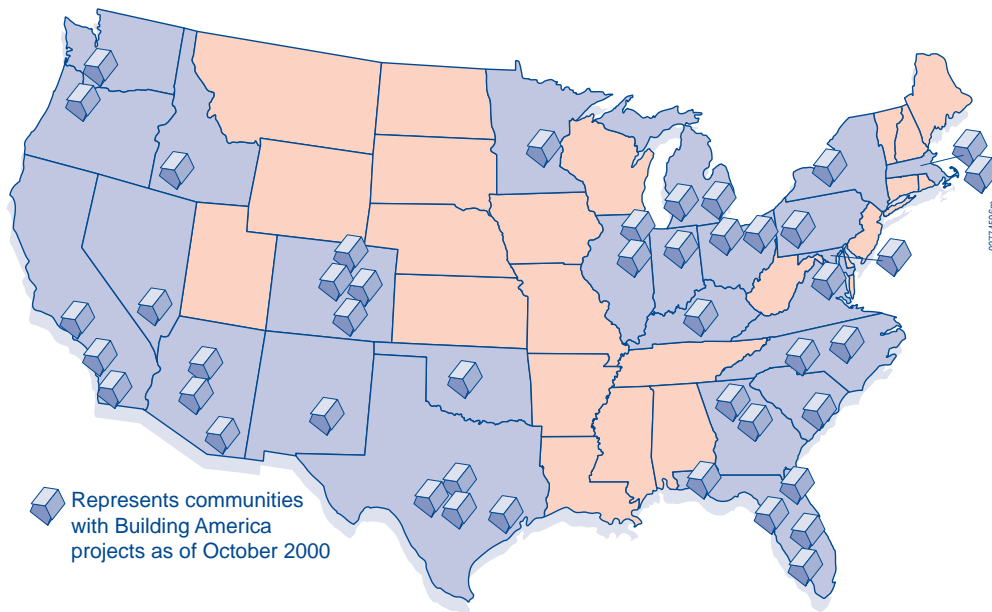
*Team Leader:* Florida Solar Energy Center

*Project Co-Funders:* Florida Energy Office and Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

*Key Partners:*

American Energy Efficient Homes of Central Florida	LaSalle Air Systems
American Lung Association	Nomaco, Inc.
Atlantic Design & Construction	North Carolina A&T State University
Beck Builders	Oregon Office of Energy
Cavalier Homes	Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
Centex Homes	Palm Harbor Homes
Champion Enterprises	Southern Energy Homes
D.R. Wastchek, LLC	Town & Country Homes of Texas
Energy Rated Homes of Nevada	Tyvek Weatherization Systems
Fleetwood Homes	University of Central Florida
Florida H.E.R.O.	Valley Manufactured Housing
Florida Power Corporation	Washington State University Energy Program
Friedrich Air Conditioning Company	York International, Manufactured Housing Division
Habitat for Humanity	

## Building America Partners by State

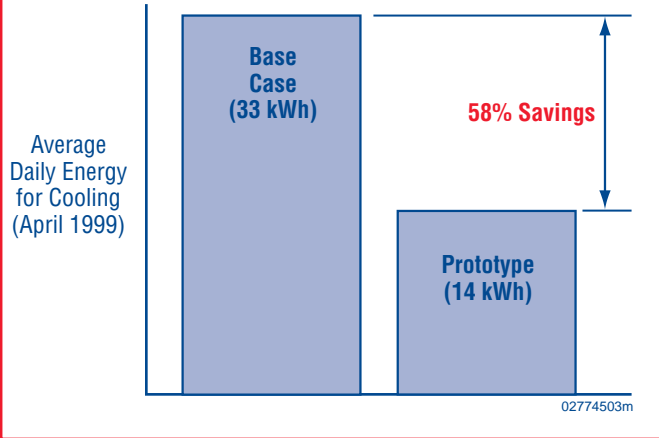


## The Projects

As of October 2000, the Building America approach has been used in the design of more than 2,000 houses in 24 states. This success is due to the efforts of more than 60 builders implementing projects in 48 different cities across the United States.

State	City	Builder Partner	State	City	Builder Partner	
Arizona	Grand Canyon	National Park Service	Massachusetts	Boston	CWC/Thomas Construction	
	Phoenix	VIP Homes		Cambridge	Epoch Corporation	
	Phoenix	Pulte Homes	Michigan	Detroit	Crosswinds	
	Phoenix	Del Webb Corp.		Grand Rapids	Pulte Homes	
	Phoenix	Palm Harbor Homes	Minnesota	Minneapolis	Centex Homes	
	Tucson	Pulte Homes		Minneapolis	Hans Hagen Homes	
	Tucson	Civano		Minneapolis	Pulte Homes	
California	Southern California	RGC	Nevada	Las Vegas	Pulte Homes	
	Simi Valley	Beazer Homes		Las Vegas	Watt Homes	
	Sylmar	Lee Homes	New Mexico	Albuquerque	Artistic Homes	
Colorado	Clear Creek County	Van Geet		New York	Rochester	Ryan Homes
	Denver	Wonderland Builders	North Carolina		Charlotte	Pulte Homes
	Denver	Habitat for Humanity		Raleigh	Carolina Country Builders	
	Longmont	McStain Homes	Ohio	Cleveland	Greenbuilt	
	Pueblo	Domega Homes		Cleveland	Tesco Builders	
	Pueblo	Tierra Concrete Homes	Oklahoma	Toledo	Randal Homes	
Florida	Ft. Myers	Pulte Homes		Norman	Ideal Homes	
	Gainesville	Florida H.E.R.O.	Oregon	Salem	Super Good Cents/Natural Choice	
	Jacksonville	Pulte Homes		Pennsylvania	Chambersburgh	New Era Building Systems
	Melbourne	Mercedes Homes	Pittsburgh		Kacin Builders	
	Pensacola	Mitchell Homes	Pittsburgh		Montgomery & Rust	
	Georgia	Plant City	Palm Harbor Homes	South Carolina	Charleston	McIntire
		Atlanta	Hedgewood Properties		Texas	Austin
Atlanta		Venture Homes	Austin	Doyle Wilson		
Cobb County		Habitat for Humanity	Georgetown	Del Webb Corp.		
Idaho	Fairburn	Ashland Homes	Houston	Beazer Homes		
	Boise	Hidden Springs	San Antonio	Medallion Homes		
	Boise	Super Good Cents/Natural Choice	Virginia	Fairfax	Pulte Homes	
Illinois	Grayslake	Sturbridge		Washington	Olympia	Super Good Cents/Natural Choice
	Vernon Hills	Town & Country	Indiana		Indianapolis	Estridge
Maryland	Frederick	Ryan Homes				

### Cooling Energy Savings for Houston Prototype House



Results of **side-by-side testing** of a Building America prototype house in **Houston, Texas**, and a base-case house constructed using the builder's standard practice. Beazer Homes is the builder partner. Testing was conducted by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

A worker installs high efficiency, **argon-filled windows** with low-emissivity glass on this Building America home in the Prairie Crossing community in **Grayslake, Illinois**. Sturbridge Construction is the builder partner.



## The Results

Each Building America team is constructing test homes and developing community-scale projects that incorporate its systems innovations. DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) provides feedback on the systems-level benefits of energy technologies and design strategies implemented by the teams. Results to date demonstrate that Building America homes use 30% to 70% less energy than conventional homes and are more comfortable. These results are documented in Building America project summaries, case studies, and on the Building America Web site at [www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building\\_america/](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america/).

## Benefits for Builders

Building America helps builders to develop a competitive advantage by reducing construction costs and improving the quality of the houses they build:

- ✓ Reduced callbacks and warranty claims
- ✓ Lower material and labor costs during construction
- ✓ Reduced purchase cost of mechanical equipment
- ✓ Less construction waste
- ✓ More options for the same sales price
- ✓ New product opportunities for manufacturers and suppliers
- ✓ Learning from other builders
- ✓ Prominence in the marketplace
- ✓ Advanced energy system integration, including photovoltaics and solar hot water.






## Benefits for Homeowners

Building America's partnership with builders also provides important benefits to homeowners by improving the quality and affordability of the product they buy:

-  Lower utility bills
-  Greater comfort
-  Better indoor air quality
-  Energy-efficient mortgages
-  Higher resale prices.

## Benefits for the Nation

The energy-efficient, healthy, and environmentally friendly houses created under Building America contribute to a better quality of life for all citizens:

-  Less reliance on fossil fuels
-  Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
-  More affordable homes for first-time homebuyers
-  Lower medical costs resulting from unhealthy or unsafe living conditions
-  Job creation in the energy-efficient building materials and equipment industry

## Homes of the Future

The research conducted by Building America teams improves the quality and performance of today's homes and provides valuable information for homes of the future. By supporting the development of innovative building methods and technologies that achieve significant energy and cost savings, the Building America Program is helping to shape the future of American homes.



Civano/PIX08777



Civano/PIX08776

Heating and cooling ducts are routed through open-web floor joists in a **sealed crawl space** for this Building America house in the Civano Community in **Tucson, Arizona**.



Building America Program/PIX04673

A third-story **module** is lifted into place on a prototype Building America duplex in a **Cambridge, Massachusetts** infill project. Epoch Corporation is the modular builder partner.



EcoDynamic Homes TM/PIX04672



## BUILDINGS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Buildings that are more energy efficient, comfortable, and affordable ... that's the goal of DOE's Office of Building Technology, State and Community Programs (BTS). To accelerate the development and wide application of energy efficiency measures, BTS:

- Conducts R&D on technologies and concepts for energy efficiency, working closely with the building industry and with manufacturers of materials, equipment, and appliances
- Promotes energy- and money-saving opportunities to both builders and buyers of homes and commercial buildings
- Works with state and local regulatory groups to improve building codes, appliance standards, and guidelines for efficient energy use
- Provides support and grants to states and communities for deployment of energy-efficient technologies and practices.



David Beal, FSEC/PIX09705

Two showcase manufactured homes being monitored side-by-side on the **North Carolina A&T State University campus**. A section of another manufactured home (below) is produced by Palm Harbor Homes in **Plant City, Florida**.



Florida Solar Energy Center/PIX09688

### Visit our Web sites at:

[www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building\\_america](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america)



[www.pathnet.org/home.html](http://www.pathnet.org/home.html)



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



#### Building America Program

George James \* Building America Program • Office of Building Systems, EE-41 \* U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W. • Washington, DC 20585-0121 • (202) 586-9472 • fax: (202) 586-8134  
e-mail: [George.James@ee.doe.gov](mailto:George.James@ee.doe.gov) • [www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building\\_america](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america)

#### Building Science Consortium

Betsy Pettit • Building Science Consortium • 70 Main Street • Westford, MA 01886 • (978) 589-5100 • fax: (978) 589-5103  
e-mail: [Betsy@buildingscience.com](mailto:Betsy@buildingscience.com) • [www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building\\_america/bsc.shtml](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america/bsc.shtml)

#### Consortium for Advanced Residential Buildings

Steven Winter • Steven Winter Associates, Inc. • 50 Washington Street • Norwalk, CT 06854  
(203) 857-0200 • fax: (203) 852-0741 • e-mail: [swinter@snet.net](mailto:swinter@snet.net) • [www.carb-swa.com](http://www.carb-swa.com)

#### Hickory Consortium

Mark Kelley • Hickory Consortium • 85 Depot Road • Harvard, MA 01451 • (617) 491-1888 • fax: (617) 491-6004  
e-mail: [dragon@world.std.com](mailto:dragon@world.std.com) • [www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building\\_america/hickory.shtml](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america/hickory.shtml)

#### IBACOS Consortium

Brad Oberg • IBACOS Consortium • 2214 Liberty Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15222 • (412) 765-3664 • fax: (412) 765-3738  
e-mail: [boberg@ibacos.com](mailto:boberg@ibacos.com) • [www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building\\_america/ibacos.shtml](http://www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america/ibacos.shtml)

#### Industrialized Housing Partnership

Subrato Chandra • Florida Solar Energy Center • 1679 Clearlake Road • Cocoa, FL 32922 • (321) 638-1412 • fax: (321) 638-1439  
e-mail: [subrato@ucf.edu](mailto:subrato@ucf.edu) • [www.baihp.org](http://www.baihp.org)

#### National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Ren Anderson • 1617 Cole Boulevard, MS4111 • Golden, Colorado 80401 • (303) 384-6191 • fax: (303) 384-6226  
e-mail: [ren\\_anderson@nrel.gov](mailto:ren_anderson@nrel.gov) • [www.nrel.gov](http://www.nrel.gov)



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