Cambridge Homes Increases Energy Efficiency in a Mix of Housing Types
Cambridge Homes — Crest Hill, Illinois

New houses designed by Cambridge Homes, with technical support from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Building America Program, save their homeowners money by applying the principles of ‘whole-building’ design to the entire home product line, so that regardless of the model chosen, home buyers can enjoy consistently high levels of comfort and performance with the added benefit of reduced operating costs.

Building America packages for Cambridge homes include double-glazed low-e windows, fully insulated basements, R-38 ceiling insulation, and ductwork (not located within the slab) brought within the conditioned space.

Cambridge uses the following energy saving features as a minimum in all of its Building America houses. Some models may include additional features that provide further value for the homeowner.

- High-performance low-e windows
- Upgraded ceiling insulation
- Low-loss duct systems
- Fully insulated basements
- Downsized AC Systems

Cambridge Homes is working with the Consortium for Advanced Residential Buildings (CARB), one of the five Building America industry teams, and is currently constructing houses to these Building America standards in several communities in and around the Chicago, Illinois area. All Building America houses built by Cambridge receive an Energy Star label that certifies the performance rating of these houses is at least 30% better than the Energy Star reference house based on the Model Energy Code. The Energy Star program is a joint effort of the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.
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-/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.

The Approach

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. More than 230 different companies make up the five Building America consortiums:

- Building Science Consortium (BSC)
- Consortium for Advanced Residential Buildings (CARB)
- Hickory Consortium
- Industrialized Housing Partnership
- Integrated Building and Construction Solutions (IBACOS) Consortium

The teams design houses from the ground up, considering the interaction between the site, building envelope, mechanical systems, and other factors. With this approach, the teams can incorporate energy-saving strategies at little or no extra cost.

Building America Performance Goal (Heating and Cooling Energy Savings)


10% 20% 30% 40% 50%

To learn more about this Building America Project, please contact:

Consortium for Advanced Residential Buildings
Steven Winter • 50 Washington Street • Norwalk, CT 06854 • (203) 857-0200 • fax: (203) 852-0741
e-mail: swinter@swinter.com

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, D.C. 20585-0121 • (202) 586-9472 • fax: (202) 586-8134
e-mail: George.James@ee.doe.gov • www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/building_america

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

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Clearinghouse at: 1-800-DOE-3732

An electronic copy of this factsheet is available on the Building America Web site: www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/Building_America

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