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Building a Future with Energy and Youth





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Publisher



Builder/Architect

Greater Toronto Edition

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Contributing Writers: Michael McKay, Brent Gwatney

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Kilbarry Hill Construction Ltd. is deeply committed to maintaining the highest quality in residential, commercial and industrial development. The company is highly devoted to delivering the best possible product, with care unmatched by their competitors. Kilbarry Hill Construction's management, design and construction teams will provide the most innovative and unique concepts for all of its clients' building needs.

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WHEN GREEN IS GOLD

Though poor economic times have dealt the green-building industry a setback, more and more consumers — as well as the federal government — are searching for ways to save money over the long term while doing the environment a favor.

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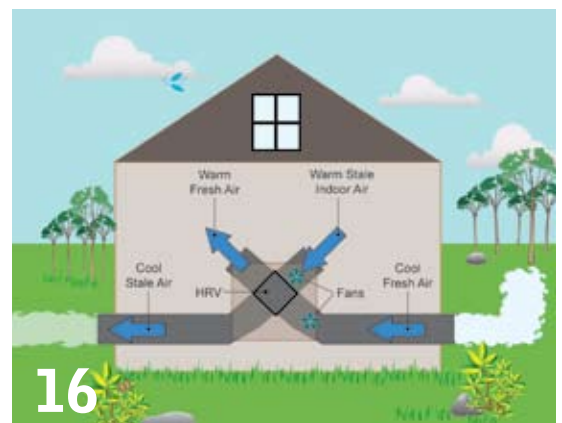
26 product showcase



PHOTO BY DANIEL DUTKA PHOTOGRAPHY

ON THE COVER

Kilbarry Hill Construction Ltd. team — front row, left to right: Dave Mecklinger, Jordy Mecklinger and Shawn Mecklinger, principals; back row, left to right: Dale Merkley, Jeff Rawn, Kevin McNabb and Dean Langman



Kilbarry Hill Construction Ltd.

Building a Future With Energy and Youth

By Michael McKay

Shawn and Jordan Mecklinger come from a long line of builders, starting with their grandfather, who established Wycliffe Homes many years ago. The young men have learned, absorbed and taken everything they've learned and established Kilbarry Hill Construction in order to pave their own way and make their own mark in the competitive GTA building industry.

The brothers could have stayed with the family business, but they were more inclined to go in a different direction.

"We really wanted to take a different avenue when it comes to building homes," says Shawn. "We really wanted to get into the custom end of things as opposed to building sub divisions. We wanted to break away from the family business and build on a smaller scale."

They started the business five years ago, and their first project was renovating a spec house at Bathurst and Eglinton.

"We were told that this is a bit of a nasty business and that this is something that young guys can have a lot of trouble with," says Jordan. "But we rolled with it, and now we've grown to having two other partners and five full-time workers and an office staff."

The brothers didn't travel the usual pattern for "next generation" builders, which usually means being on site as laborers or part of the clean-up crew and learning the business by getting down and dirty. Shawn started as a project manager for his grandfather's company.

"I helped by working on some of their plazas. I helped re build a plaza at Bathurst and Sheppard. I helped develop a freestanding Tim Horton's at Steeles and the 404," says Shawn.

Jordan adds, "I spent my summers doing property management for my father for his commercial buildings. I would go around speaking with different tenants and addressing their maintenance concerns. I also spent a couple of summers as an assistant to the surveyors, staking out roads, sewer systems and lot sites. I worked on probably a dozen subdivisions throughout southern Ontario."

Shawn has a B.A. of Political Science from the University of Western Ontario and a degree in real estate finance from the University of British Columbia, while Jordan has a degree in urban development from the University of Western Ontario, which entailed studying planning and real estate finance.

While their pedigree has opened doors for them, the brothers keep those doors open by utilizing an incredible amount of energy and flexibility that customers find inspiring and refreshing.

"Because of our age, my brother and I have boundless



PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUTKA PHOTOGRAPHY





PHOTO BY DANIEL DUTKA PHOTOGRAPHY

energy to offer clients,” says Jordan, who’s 28.

Shawn, 30, adds, “We are open to new ideas. We love to exchange ideas with clients. We are flexible enough to present their ideas to designers and architects to see if those ideas will fly. We’re also realistic enough to tell clients what the professionals say, but then do our best to incorporate what we can. After all, it’s their home and the largest investment they’ve ever made.”

The brothers work with architect Richard Wengle, and he’s

become somewhat of a mentor to Jordan.

“Richard is fantastic in what he does. His attention to detail and his designs are a cut above,” says Jordan. “We learn something from him in every project we do.”

Shawn adds, “We love his attention to detail and his ability to step outside of his comfort zone to create unique home, such as the modern cubist building he designed on Braemar Avenue.”

Shawn and Jordan have defined their roles in the



PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUTKA PHOTOGRAPHY



company and have utilized their personal strengths to contribute to the ultimate success of every project they take on. Shawn is the Director of Business Development and is tasked with running the office. This entails taking care of all the accounting, billing, marketing and finance. Jordan is the Director of Operations. He is at the building sites and considers himself the first line of communication with the customers and trades. He makes sure his people are where they should be and, more importantly, he is the person to make sure things are done to specifications. Recently, their youngest brother, Dave, joined the company as the Director of Acquisitions.

The brothers admit that they seem very young to be as successful as they are in the home building business. However, they see their age as being

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— Shawn Mecklinger



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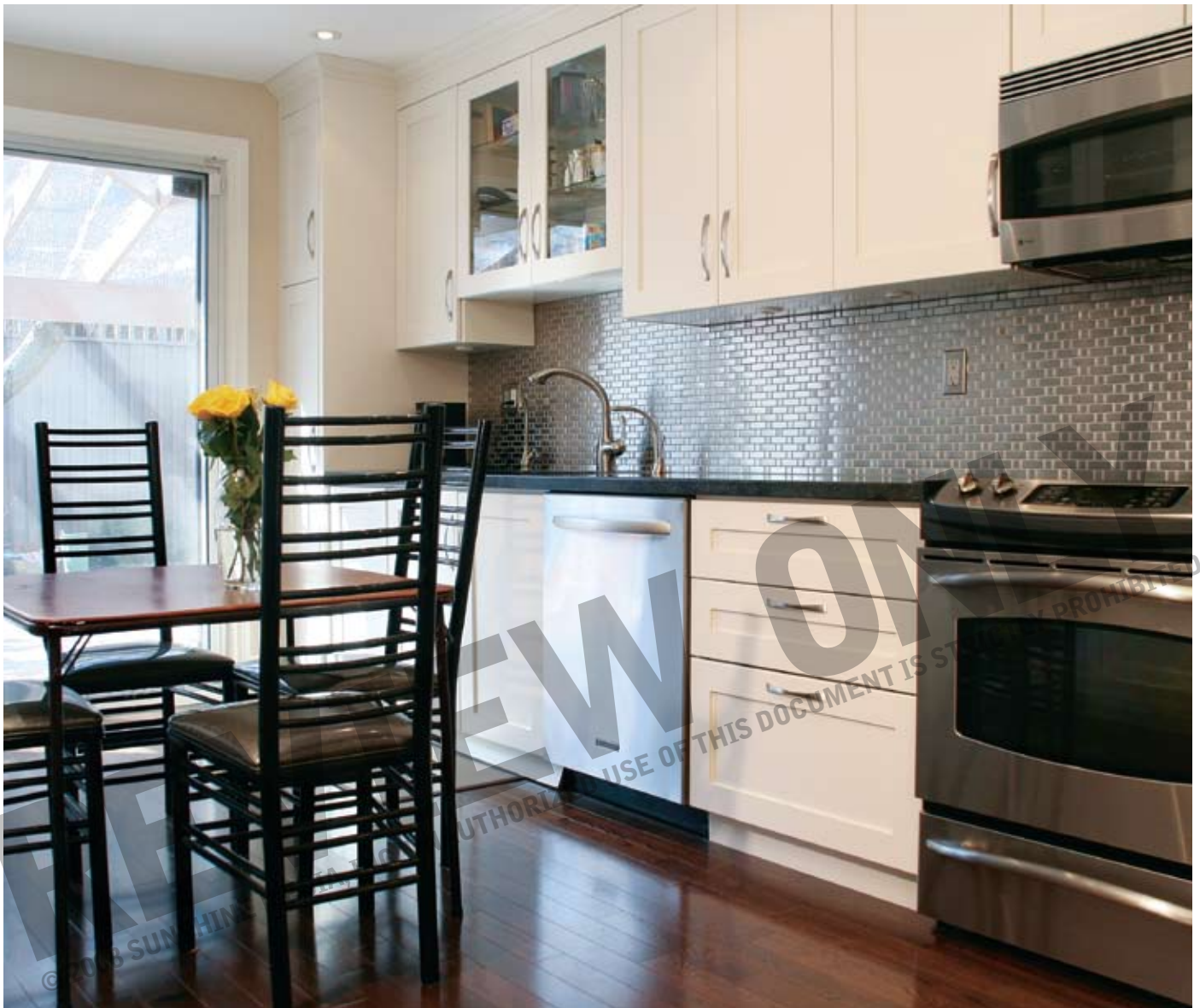
a key to their early success. A project they put together on Croft St. in the College and Bathurst area is a testament to their youthful energy and enthusiasm. They took a one-time photographer's studio that was situated in a laneway and turned it into a two-unit upscale home.

"There are 250 miles of under-utilized laneways in Toronto, and our vision was to take a piece of that and develop the space more creatively," says Shawn. "Unfortunately, there were more hoops to go through than we first anticipated."

Jordan carries on, "The site was designated as a residential unit, but it had been used commercially for years. Needless to say, getting variances and going to meetings at city hall seemed to take as much time as it did to do the conversion."



PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUTKA PHOTOGRAPHY



They used this time very efficiently and got to know the people at city hall, and it consequently turned out to be an important learning tool for them.

The two units — one a professional unit, the other a

family unit — were designed by K-Squared Design; they both function as the brothers had anticipated and have become a symbol of what drive, determination and imagination can achieve.

Jordan and Shawn are quick to acknowledge the benefits of having been brought up in a family whose life's work has and is home building, but they are by no means resting on that history. They are brothers with plans of their own, and a determination to become one of the top custom-home builders/renovators in the city.

"We're staying within certain limits right now," says Shawn. "We want to slowly grow our business so that one day we'll be mentioned as one of the companies people look for when choosing a custom-home builder."

To find out more about Kilbarry Hill Construction Ltd., go to www.kilbarryhill.com. ■



PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUTKA PHOTOGRAPHY

Lighting Max: Taking Convenience to the Max for Residential Lighting Fixture Selection

While growing up in the 1970s, Steven Shaffer spent plenty of time in his family's lighting business observing the customers who browsed the showroom.

His keen eye and the entrepreneurial spirit that was bred in the bone led to what would become an extremely successful career as founder and CEO of Lighting Max.



This North American company, with offices in Cleveland, OH, and Toronto, ON, has revolutionized the lighting industry by providing an innovative, interactive online service that enables residential construction professionals to help their clients select quality lighting fixtures more easily than ever before.

According to Shaffer, "As a youngster, I saw many excited customers become overwhelmed by the showroom selection and frustrated when the sales representatives were busy with other clients. I figured there had to be a better way, and that idea blossomed as my knowledge of electronic media grew."

In 1999, Shaffer developed a computerized program that showcased lights from the top companies in the country. He piloted the program in builders' and contractors' design and selection centres in northeast Ohio. The first version offered 500 lighting products from which to choose. The company's professional builder and remodeling partners consistently recommended Lighting Max to their valued customers and colleagues.

Recognizing the potential for growth, Shaffer assembled a team of talented sales professionals to train and coach design personnel in hundreds of U.S. home building organizations. The result was a program that enhanced the customer experience to the



point that it became a highlight of the home building/renovation experience. "By bringing the showroom to the client, the online selection process became easy and fun," he says.

In 2001, Lighting Max launched its third version, offering 3,000 lighting products, and by 2003, the company had achieved a

25% share of the 12,000 new-home sales in the northeast Ohio market and expanded to Cincinnati and southern Ohio. The organization grew again to offer more than 5,000 products in 2005, and by 2006 had expanded to Charlotte, NC.

The year 2008 was a pivotal one, when Lighting Max released an online version with over 10,000 lighting products showcased, and in 2009 became available in Canada in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Bringing the lighting showroom to the customer has enhanced the marketability of Lighting Max's clients, which include low- and high-rise builders and their décor centres, or outsourced décor professionals, electricians, renovators, general contractors, designers and consumers who are working with these industry professionals to build, renovate or improve their homes. Experienced professional lighting counselors are available to answer questions and guide customers in the selection process. The selections can be done in the builder's décor centre or in the comfort of the customer's home.



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Jordan Mecklinger VP Operations uses Xmark Antiskid Foam and Xmark Housewrap extensively to protect his projects inside and out.

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The virtual online showroom is available 24/7, 365 days a year, and includes lighting options in the newest trends to fit every style and budget.

Lighting Max is easy to use, and saves time and money. Shoppers find the selection organized and far less overwhelming than maneuvering through a store. They can choose by style, room, finish or piece, which translates to one-stop shopping for lighting for the entire

home or project. They can even select lighting packages that match the number of outlets in their home — a flexible system that enables them to upgrade one or all of the lights in their package to help place their personal stamp on their surroundings.

Adding to the benefits, building professional clients have a new profit centre, and their décor centres can sell decorative lighting upgrades, eliminating

the unwanted standard builder lights that end up in landfill sites. Plus, builders have control over the selections process and production timelines.



Via the computerized catalog, consumers' choices can be referenced quickly by the builder, which allows for timely ordering and installation. Lighting Max is a virtual supply chain organization, shipping locally in both Canada and the United States. In the GTA, a ready-stocked warehouse in Mississauga, ON, is prepared for shipping and installation on demand.

Vendor inventory is updated daily on the website to help ensure on-time delivery, and an on-demand customer service centre offers a level of product and service support that is unmatched in the industry.

This has resulted in a continuation of the positive word of mouth that has helped Lighting Max grow over the past decade as the premier online residential illumination source for residential building professionals and their customers.

Shaffer's idea has become a win-win-win situation, with the end-users receiving a service they enjoy, production staff knowing that the lighting fixtures will be installed when scheduled and the builders and other industry professional clients being able to augment their bottom line.

"The concept is about passion on both sides of the computer screen," Shaffer says, "with the customers who want their new surroundings to have the right finishing touch in illumination, and the builders they work with, whose goal is customer satisfaction and a job well done."

For more information, visit www.lighting-max.ca. ■

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Savoia Canada Makes Stylish Mark on Toronto's Design District With Spectacular Showroom of Luxurious Italian Porcelain Surfaces

Distinctive Layout Encourages Collaboration Between Architects, Designers and Discerning Clients

The ultimate in fashion flooring and wall coverings has touched down in downtown Toronto with the opening of Savoia Canada Inc.'s exquisite new 4,500-square-foot showroom, showcasing the hottest high-end porcelain surfaces this side of Italy. Open to the public, the much-anticipated showroom serves as a one-stop shop for the entire line of the GranitiFiandre Corporation's prestigious porcelain surfaces, including

GeoStyle, Geologica, GeoTecnica, Xtra and Granitech.

Strategically situated at 145 King Street East in the heart of the city's trendy furniture and design district for greater accessibility, the distinctive showroom — itself a master showpiece for the very latest porcelain surface trends and innovations that have Europe abuzz — has been expertly designed to offer architects, designers and their discerning clients an

inviting and collaborative environment in which to discuss and shape their unique residential and commercial projects.

"Until now, anyone looking for floor and wall coverings had to travel to the suburbs to cold, unappealing showrooms or fight the weekend traffic and lineups," says Piergiorgio Mazzetta, Executive Vice President, Savoia Canada Inc. "With the opening of our new contemporary showroom in downtown

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Toronto, true sophistication, style and selection from Italy's most celebrated tile manufacturer is now steps from home. We are extremely excited to be bringing GranitiFiandre's porcelain surfaces to the Ontario marketplace and look forward to welcoming local industry professionals and homeowners to our new collaborative space."

Savoia Canada is the exclusive manager of GranitiFiandre's entire Canadian operation. The new showroom will showcase GranitiFiandre brand's five award-winning categories of porcelain surfaces in hun-

dreds of designs, colours, textures, sizes and special piece options. The company's glazed and unglazed product designs, ventilated façades and access flooring systems are ideal for interiors, exteriors and façade cladding for heavily used public spaces, commercial and residential applications.

This month, the spotlight will be on the newly released Jewel, Belgian Blue and Stone Forest collections, all of which were launched at Coverings 2009 held recently in Chicago:

- The Jewel Collection is manufactured with an innovative glass and porcelain technology through a patented process, creates a cascade of light effect on the tile surface and offers a sophisticated embellishment to its design environment;
- The Belgian Blue Collection boasts light-coloured veining criss-crossing its surface, reminiscent of classic marks left by coral and shell fossils. It's perfect for sleek, modern spaces defined by high quality and durability;



- The Stone Forest Collection offers the textured beauty of petrified wood in a durable porcelain tile product, evoking the geological evolution of nature's woodlands in transforming plant, bark and fossils throughout the ages.

"Canada's designers and architects are known throughout the world for their exceptional creativity and commitment to the highest industry standards, so it is only natural that we solidify our Canadian presence and surround ourselves by such a talented group of professionals," says Graziano Verdi,

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Chair and CEO, GranitiFiandre. "The launch of Savoia Canada's extensive showroom is one of GranitiFiandre's most important global retail events, a place where inspiration and ingenuity will collide to produce the very best in residential and commercial projects."

Mr. Verdi, who is based in GranitiFiandre's headquarters in Castellarano, Italy, was in Toronto to celebrate the grand opening of the Savoia Canada showroom. Savoia also operates smaller showrooms in Montreal and Vancouver.

The showroom will be open to the public as follows: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday by appointment.

Founded in 1961 in Castellarano, Italy, GranitiFiandre Corporation has for decades supplied global customers with the highest quality selection of fine architectural surfacing products. With international facilities in Italy, Germany and the United States, as well as a global distribution network, GranitiFiandre is



equipped to address product needs for an array of architectural and design situations. The company's Canadian operations are managed through Savoia Canada Inc., headquartered in Toronto with offices in Vancouver and Montréal. Dedication to a healthy and safe environment is an important part of GranitiFiandre's history, and the company proudly continues the tradition of environmental leadership at its Canadian facility. Significant investments in

materials usage efficiency, air quality protection, water resource management and energy efficiency are the hallmarks of GranitiFiandre's corporate stewardship. GranitiFiandre is listed on the STAR division of the Italian Stock Exchange. For more information, visit www.granitifandre.com.

Savoia Canada Inc. is a leading distributor of high-end ceramic and porcelain flooring and wall coverings to the residential and commercial markets. Operating in Canada since 1993, the company is owned by the GranitiFiandre Group, a world leader in the production and sale of high-quality porcelain surfaces. The company operates a 4,500-square-foot showroom in the heart of Toronto's trendy furniture and design district featuring the latest in Italian designs. Smaller showrooms are located in Montréal and Vancouver. Savoia Canada is the proud supplier of dozens of national accounts all over Canada and is involved in many of Canada's most important and prestigious projects. For more information on the Savoia product line, visit www.savoia.com. ■

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When Green Is Gold

Today's
Sustainable
Buildings

Green: It's the one word that springs to mind whenever one considers the future of building. To a large extent, however, the future is now. Though poor economic times have dealt the green-building industry a setback, more and more consumers — as well as the federal government — are searching for

ways to save money over the long term while doing the environment a favor. As a result, we may look back on the current recession in two or three decades as the catalyst for a green-building boom time.

Simply put, green buildings seek to maximize energy efficiency while

minimizing environmental impact. A sustainable structure should use resources wisely and remain healthful for both the environment and its occupants throughout its life, from construction and maintenance to deconstruction.

BUILDING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME

At Capital Construction, Inc., of Ballston Spa, NY, green building isn't about filling an obscure niche in a crowded industry; it's about adhering to a philosophy of building that's poised for big growth in the years to come.

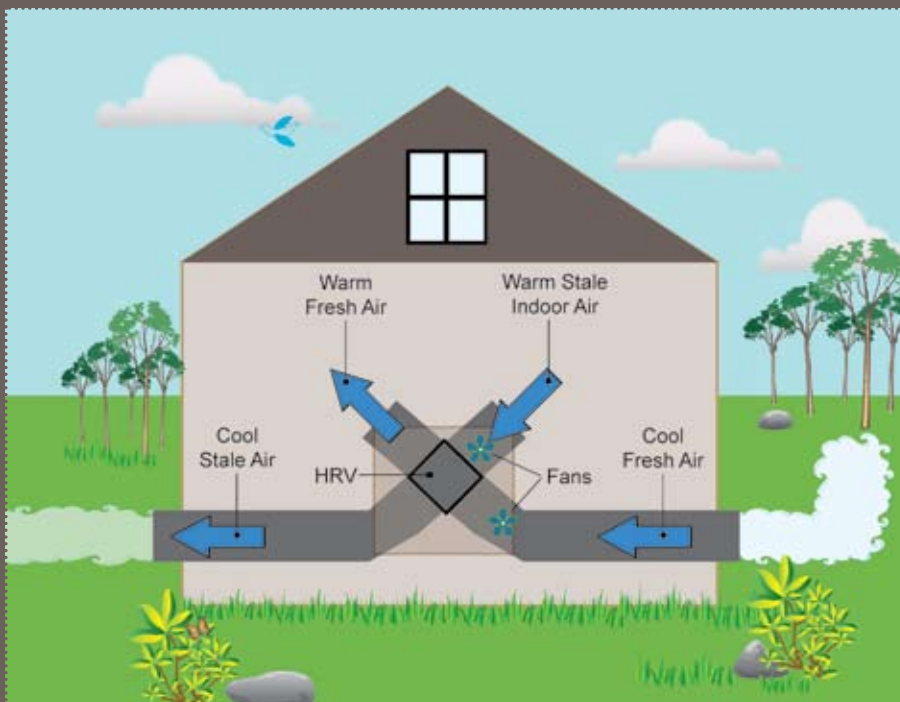
"My decision to get into green building was primarily a business one," says Frank Laskey, President of Capital Construction, Inc. "I was interested in building a better product to reduce warranty costs, and I discovered that many of the issues that were callbacks for me and most builders could be alleviated if houses were simply built right the first time. I concluded that building green — constructing a home that's durable, low maintenance, energy efficient and healthful for the environment and its occupants — is building it right the first time."

Though Laskey admits the economic downturn has forced many consumers to take a best-deal, cost-per-square-foot approach to home buying and building, he knows the future of green building is bright. With energy prices uncertain, consumers are beginning to realize the value of investing a little more money upfront to save big over the lifetime of a home.

"The essence of building sustainable homes is taking a whole-house approach and paying attention to how all the parts work together," Laskey says. "You can't look at the heating and cooling package without looking at the insulation package. In our model home, we have an automation system that controls the lights, window operations and heating and cooling. Everything contributes to efficiency."

Laskey identifies three components he considers invaluable to his green homes:

- A sealed, combustion-condensing boiler starting at 15,000 British thermal units extracts moisture from the heat it produces and uses heat from the moisture to



recirculate throughout the unit, helping to ensure good indoor air quality.

- A MemBrain vapor barrier by CertainTeed allows a home to breathe by responding to moisture levels in the house and walls. Pores in MemBrain open to allow moisture that's migrated into a wall to vent or close to prevent moisture penetration.
- A heat recovery ventilation (HRV) system takes stale, moist air from a



home, deposits it outside, admits fresh outdoor air and circulates it, resulting in a home that doesn't smell new even when freshly constructed. HRV systems are great for individuals who suffer from allergies or asthma, as the improved air quality allows them to breathe easier.

"A typical 2,500-square-foot house built by my company costs approximately \$1,800 to \$2,200 a year to heat, cool, power and light," Laskey says. "Consumers don't have to sacrifice aesthetics for functionality; green homes can be beautiful and high-end. The bottom line: You can't ignore green building. If you embrace it, your business will grow."

LIGHTING THE WAY

Jeff Bisberg has seen LED lighting come a long way. In fact, the CEO of Albeo Technologies in Boulder, CO, contends that his product is on the verge of a paradigm shift.

"When our company was founded in 2004, we used LED lights that produced only 20 lumens per watt," says Bisberg. "Technology has advanced so rapidly that now we're using lights that produce 110 lumens per watt, and we're starting to think about where the technology is going to max out. Right now, what drives sales



Jeff Bisberg

changing and dimming."

How did LED — and Albeo Technologies — come so far, so fast? It all starts with the technology's numerous benefits. LED lighting by Albeo Technologies boasts easy installation and maintenance, environmental responsibility and superior quality. In Bisberg's estimation, LED addresses two sides of the same worrisome coin: global warming and growing demand for energy. LED reduces carbon emissions by cutting down the amount of energy used in an industrial setting, which saves watts generated at power plants — not to mention easing the burden on customers' wallets. LED also cuts down on labor costs associated with maintaining a lighting infrastructure and makes tying up dollars in replacement inventory a thing of the past.

"The environmental benefits of LED — as well as strong return on investment — tend to resonate with our customers," Bisberg says. "Currently, our products are more efficient than incandescent and fluorescent, and we expect a 30% improvement in efficiency by next year."

Albeo Technologies' focus on industrial spaces is somewhat

of LED is strictly efficacy, but as LED becomes 50% to 100% better than fluorescent, other features of the product will define the value, such as color

unique in the industry, with the company offering high bay, low bay, linear and garage lighting solutions. The company recently installed high bay lighting in a cold storage warehouse that reduced the energy consumed in lighting the structure by 95% — 5% more than Albeo Technologies' estimation. Other projects have included a government assembly warehouse in search of high lighting reliability and a large retail store that sought to replace fluorescent bulbs for greater efficiency.

"The amazing thing about LED is the best is yet to come," Bisberg says. "The money being pumped into LED technology will accelerate development even more. The next decade is going to be an exciting time."

BRIGHT FUTURE

The building industry is not yet at a point where green structures make sense for everyone, everywhere, but that day may be fast approaching. One thing that's certain is that green-building practices are here to stay, and increased demand for energy-efficient, environmentally friendly homes will lead to even greater innovations in green technology. It may not be time to overhaul the way you build, but it may be time to take a look at what building green has to offer. ■



AP PHOTO COURTESY OF GE PRESS RELEASE

The Immersion LED Display Case Lighting system uses multiple point sources of light to increase reflectivity and sparkle while reducing operating costs.

Move Over Masons: Area Separation Wall Assemblies Save Time and Money for Residential Builders

When rain or snow hit a construction site, it often means slowing down, but building company Joe DiFranco & Son Limited and the framing crew from Lukas Smith Construction were able to save up to two weeks' labour and costs on a recent build — with the help of Georgia-Pacific.

Victoria Estates is a 38-unit residential townhome complex. The townhomes, located at Gibson Place and Niagara Street in St. Catharines, ON, were the first of a handful of homes in Ontario to be built with Georgia-Pacific's area separation wall assemblies.

The builders used Georgia-Pacific's DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner fiberglass mat gypsum boards in the construction of two-hour firewalls and one-hour party wall assemblies as an alternative to masonry block in its multiresidential build.

SAFETY FIRST

Recent changes to the National Building Code of Canada (2005) allow for the option of using materials other than concrete or masonry in the construction of two-hour firewalls, based on the system's acceptance by the local building code authorities. The system can also be installed in virtually any weather due to the moisture resistance of fiberglass mat panels, providing additional flexibility for builders and their teams.

Townhomes require strict construction methods to provide residents with safe, fire-resistant and sound-isolating homes. The Georgia-Pacific gypsum area separation wall assembly is designed specifically for use in multifamily, multistory townhouses as a firewall with a total height up to 68 feet. Because it is constructed using gypsum

panels, the assembly is easy to erect and secure, and provides a cost-effective two-hour fire protection system and sound control up to 60 STC, which meets code requirements.

The gypsum core in DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner panels is designed to withstand high temperatures from fire. "Gypsum is a noncombustible material which contains chemically combined water molecules," says Ken McLeod, Georgia-Pacific Canada Field Sales Manager. "When the material is exposed to the heat of fire, the water molecule is released as steam, which absorbs and dissipates some of the heat and helps protect the adjoining unit."

The area separation wall is constructed once the framing for one townhouse unit is complete and prior to the construction of the adjacent unit. The assembly is constructed at the foundation and continues either to the underside of the protected roof sheathing for party walls or through



the roof to form a parapet as required for firewall construction.

The system uses 1-inch thick, 24-inch wide DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner panels, 2-1/8-inch thick, 25-gauge steel H-studs and C-track and aluminum breakaway clips. The assembly is linked to the adjacent framing with the aluminum breakaway clips, which have a melting point over 1,100° Fahrenheit, explains McLeod. "Under extreme fire conditions, the aluminum clip melts and allows the fire engulfed unit to release away from the firewall, leaving the area separation wall in place to protect the adjacent unit."

The solid 2-inch area separation wall is constructed a minimum of 3/4 inches away from the adjacent framing, which is typically constructed from wood. In many cases, the area separation wall is positioned one-inch away from wall framing to accommodate the 1 inch DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner panels used as fire blocking between the floor levels. The ULC design W312 area separation wall assembly was evaluated at a height up to 44 feet and the WHI/ITS GP/WA 120-04 area separation wall assembly was evaluated at a height up to 68 feet.

SAVE TIME AND MONEY

The Georgia-Pacific area separation wall

system gave contractors increased scheduling flexibility when constructing the 38-unit Victoria Estates residential complex.

Not only is the area separation wall system fire tested, but DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner panels consist of a moisture-resistant core with coated fiberglass mats front and back instead of paper facings like traditional shaftliner panels. The fiberglass mat facings allow for superior mould and moisture resistance when compared to paper-faced drywall, which allows for installation in any weather.

Victoria Estates builder Dominic DiFranco, owner of Joe DiFranco & Son Limited, had already finalized the plans with masonry block walls, but called the decision to change the plans a smart move. They managed to get the demising walls of the first block of six townhomes up in just over four days. He explained that masonry walls probably would have



taken two weeks.

Georgia-Pacific's team provided on-site training for the framing crew. The boards are lighter in weight and allow for quicker and easier builds, because the boards can be installed at the same time as framing. Large panels, like those used at Victoria Estates, which come in 2-foot widths by 8, 10- or 12-foot lengths, offer additional efficiency.

The framing crew installed the area separation walls of five units in one day. The framer also commented that had the job been specified in masonry block, the

crew would have had to leave the site for over a week while the block walls went up. Eliminating the installation of masonry blocks at Victoria Estates meant a cleaner, less expensive and more efficient build.

Because the assembly will be exposed to the elements during construction, Georgia-Pacific gypsum DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner offers increased protection to the owner, builder and architect with the moisture- and mould-resistant panel, which is backed by a weather exposure limited warranty for up to 12 months.

In the construction of two-hour firewalls and one-hour party wall assemblies, with the use of Georgia-Pacific's DensGlass Ultra Shaftliner fiberglass mat gypsum boards instead of masonry block, building crews can save a significant amount of time and money. Victoria Estates residential unit is a prime example of the product's superiority. ■

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CONGRATULATIONS TO KILBARRY HILL!

Building a Strong Marketing Plan in Tough Times

As today's economic conditions present challenges for sales possibilities, a builder's message is more important than ever. S. Robert August & Company has been delivering innovative solutions for builders and developers for more than 25 years.

Since 1983, S. Robert August & Company has generated more than \$12 billion in revenue for its clients by implementing a combination of sales, marketing and management strategies that are both innovative and intuitive in the changing marketplace.

Much of the success of S. Robert August & Company can be attributed to the vision of its founder, S. Robert August, who also serves as NAHB Life Director. His

perspective on the current marketplace reflects more than 25 years of experiencing marketplace fluctuations and changes in the way builders approach marketing and management.

"This is the seventh downturn that I have seen in my career," says August. "Many builders who are not experienced in selling their product in a challenging market are realizing that sales is a highly charged and emotional undertaking, and you must be in top shape to succeed."

A CRISIS OF QUALITY: REALIZING YOUR PROJECT'S POTENTIAL

August says that after the housing boom

of the 1990s, many builders began to decrease their roles in overseeing projects from beginning to end, eventually leading to a detrimentally specialized confinement that diminished their knowledge of sales.

"Many builders have simply never sold," says August. "To be as effective as possible, builders need to reacquaint themselves with every aspect of every project. Only then can they have a complete understanding of satisfying the buyer's needs."

ROTATIONAL HARVEST

In a challenging market, many builders may be tempted to save valuable capital by foregoing marketing efforts — even eliminating their marketing teams

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Congratulations Kilbarry Hill Construction!
Best wishes for continued success.

This is the seventh downturn that I have seen in my career. Many builders who are not experienced in selling their product in a challenging market are realizing that sales is a highly charged and emotional undertaking, and you must be in top shape to succeed.

— S. Robert August

altogether — but August says the alternative is usually no stronger.

“Many builders will go to a realty company after letting go of their marketing specialists, but the Realtor’s approach is not always beneficial for the builder,” says August. “Realtors try to attract a buyer, but if the buyer has concerns, the Realtor will simply take them to another location rather than helping a buyer go through his or her needs and make a sale happen. When Realtors are running through dozens of listings each day, they can’t be focused on making each product excellent.”

August terms this method a “rotational harvest,” in which the crop is laid by builders, the sales harvested and buyers are quickly taken to another location. He recommends avoiding such practices, and instead suggests builders become more engaged in marketing their own products.

A SHIFT IN MARKETING APPROACH

Accompanying the technological progress of recent years has come a shift in the way consumers receive information, which includes marketing messages. The real estate market has not been immune to this shift.

S. Robert August & Company has been delivering innovative solutions for builders and developers for more than 25 years.

“The National Association of Home Builders recently completed a study that found 86% of buyers research homes online before buying,” says August. “That number is rising all the time, and needless to say, it has never been more important to have an engaging and comprehensive website and to keep it updated. S. Robert August & Company is currently on the 10th generation of its website.”

Social networking sites also offer new opportunities to market to a large audience. Sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn have millions of regular users who may be potential buyers.

“Builders must be careful when marketing in these new platforms; while they can be very effective, there is a strong tendency for information to be too brief and too cryptic,” says August. “Many businesses get swept up in new marketing methods; they lose sight of conveying a thorough message.”

PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Throughout the years of market ups and downs, August maintains that the key to S. Robert August & Company’s success has been its employees.

“We have all heard of the four ‘Ps’ of success: product, place, price and promotion. The most important element is left out of that list: people,” says August. “Before you can begin marketing or branding effectively, you have to have knowledgeable, dedicated people who understand the product down to the last detail. That is what will make one builder stand out among the rest.” ■



Thanks!

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Attract Customers With Environmentally Responsible Composite Decking

By Brent Gwatney

Q: I've always built decks with wood, but a colleague recommended considering composite materials. What advantages does composite decking provide?

A: An increasingly popular choice for residential and commercial applications, wood-plastic composite decking provides builders and architects with durability, design flexibility and environmental responsibility in one long-lasting material. From decks and docks to patio surfaces and planter boxes, composite decking is suitable for a variety of outdoor uses and is anticipated to last two to three times longer than wood decking.

Composite decking is typically manufactured with a 50/50 blend of wood fiber and polyethylene plastics. The surrounding plastic bonds to the wood fibers, and in turn, the wood fibers reinforce the plastic, adding stiffness. Some materials like MoistureShield

composite decking and railing use a special encapsulation process for which the finished product absorbs substantially less moisture than other composites and solid wood. The result is greater resistance to rot, decay, insects and termites. These factors allow it to be used in projects that have direct contact with the ground (such as landscape trim), applications exposed to incidental saltwater (such as dock surfaces) and climates with variable temperature changes.

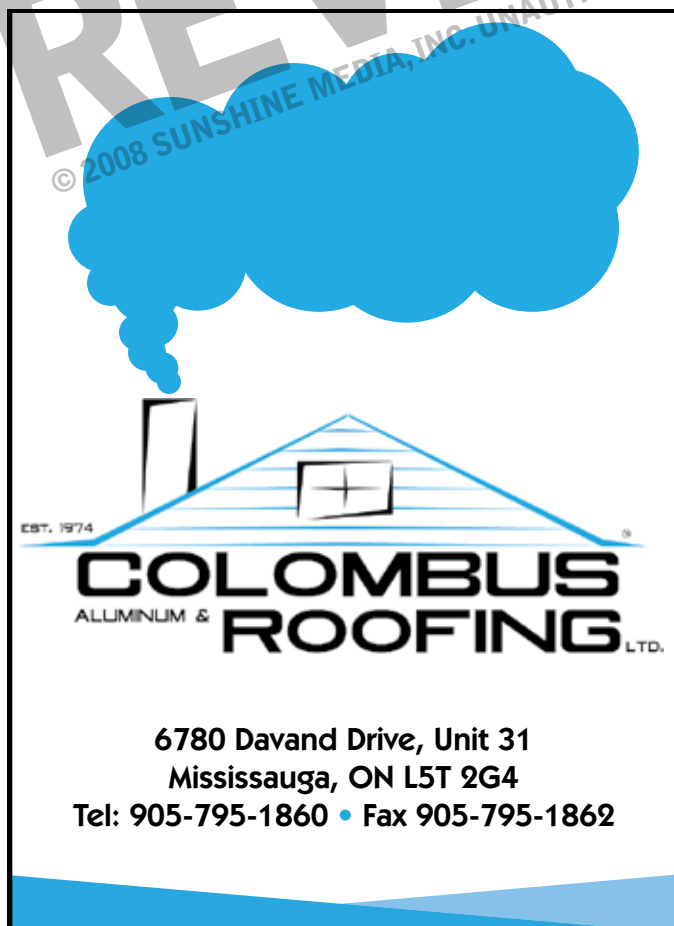
Decking areas built with composite materials also resist splintering, twisting, splitting and cracking. The slip-resistant, splinter-free surface is desirable for kid-friendly structures, pool decks and spa surrounds where safety is a concern. Composite decking also does not require sealing or staining, making it a low-maintenance option.

For builders and architects committed to sustainable construction, some composite decking includes recycled content such as wood fiber and polyethylene plastics from items like milk jugs and grocery bags. This practice helps prevent thousands of pounds of trash from entering landfills each year. Composite decking products with high postconsumer recycled content can also qualify for credit under green-building rating systems, including the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program.

With color choices ranging from gray to the warm, multidimensional hues of tropical hardwoods, builders and architects can complement existing structures or mix and match multiple colors to create unique deck designs. Composite deck boards can also be easily bent and shaped for applications that call for curved boards such as stairs, railings, trellises and walkway arches. Popular curved additions to decks and docks include built-in benches, planter boxes, rounded edges and inlaid designs for enhanced visual appeal.

To further expand design flexibility, some manufacturers have added decorative railing components and innovative new products to their material offerings. For example, composite deck tiles provide a unique option for outdoor surfacing on patios, balconies, rooftops and virtually any hard, level surface. Materials like EcoShield deck tiles snap together for simple and secure installation, and are available in multiple colors, sizes and patterns. They will not rot, splinter or decay and can be easily unsnapped, repositioned or removed at any time to create a new design.

Brent Gwatney is Vice President of Sales and Marketing for MoistureShield composite decking. For more information, visit www.moistureshield.com or call 1-866-729-2378. ■



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Brookfield Homes Tops J.D. Power Survey

Being named the GTA's top new-home builder when it comes to customer satisfaction is terrific, but what it really does is underscore Brookfield Homes' 50-year history of delivering on its promises, says company President Sid Kerrigan.

"We have been among the top performers in the J.D. Power New Home Buyer Satisfaction ratings since the annual survey started five years ago," says Kerrigan, president of Brookfield Homes' Ontario housing division. "We think that trust and quality is what our customers truly value. We often hear that builder reputation is way down on the list of what drives a new-home buying decision, but that is just not the case when it comes to what matters most with our customers."

"Being ranked No. 1 is wonderful for both the company and our customers," Kerrigan adds. "Our customers can tell their friends they live in a Brookfield home, and now J.D. Power ranks that as the best. What is even more important to us is to be consistently near the top, year after year, and so far we have achieved that goal. The reality is that we make our customers first — every day."

In the 2009 survey, Brookfield Homes achieved a score of 861 (on a 1,000 point-to-point scale), one of the highest scores achieved to date since J.D. Power started its survey in the GTA in 2005.

"We came into the year with a strong sales backlog, so we knew exactly what we were building, and did not experience any of the delays that can sometimes hold up a construction schedule," Kerrigan says. "We have some of the top people in the industry working for us, and we let each site act as its own team, so the credit has to go to them for ensuring it all came together."

"We delivered exactly what we promised. That is what home buyers have come to expect from Brookfield Homes."

Brookfield Homes' achievement was especially impressive in a year when J.D. Power reported overall buyer satisfaction declined for the first time in the five years it has conducted the survey. Although the



Brookfield Homes Ontario received the J.D. Power Award as the Greater Toronto Area's top new-home builder for customer satisfaction. The company achieved a score of 861 out of a possible 1,000 points, one of the highest scores to date since J.D. Power started in the GTA in 2005.

overall satisfaction rate in the industry fell 36 points this year to an average of 674 points, Brookfield Homes not only sustained its strong performance from 2008, but actually improved its score by 70 points.

According to J.D. Power, "Brookfield performs particularly well in six of the eight factors that contribute to overall satisfaction: home readiness, service/warranty staff, construction/site team, physical design, price/value and sales staff."

Mattamy Homes and Tribute



(Left to right) David Ragona, J.D. Power and Associates; Sid Kerrigan, President and CEO, Brookfield Homes; Brian Couperthwaite, V.P. Construction, Brookfield Homes; Marc Thibault, J.D. Power and Associates

Communities follow Brookfield Homes in the GTA market rankings.

Brookfield Homes is currently building in five high-quality new-home communities: Oshawa (Hills of Harrowsmith), Bradford (Grand Central), Brantford (Grand Valley Trails), Georgetown (Silver Creek) and in historic Niagara-on-the-Lake (The Village).

"What this year's results show is the value we pride ourselves on building into our homes," says Kerrigan. "We think long term and strive to create enduring value. Drive through any of our communities, and over time, you can tell the difference."

"We firmly believe what we do, we do very well. It is very much appreciated when those that matter most, our own customers, tell us that as well." ■

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Green Resources for Energy Efficient Neighborhoods Act to Encourage Affordable, Sustainable Homes

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) is praising the Green Resources for Energy Efficient Neighborhoods (GREEN) Act of 2009, H.R. 2336.

The GREEN Act sets new green-building and sustainability benchmarks for properties that receive financial assistance from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

However, NAHB President Jerry Howard expressed his concerns over H.R. 2454, another important piece of legislation regarding climate change. If passed, H.R. 2454 would make the GREEN Act obsolete before it is even signed.

"I am hopeful this subcommittee will be able to restore the balance necessary to truly

The GREEN Act sets new green-building and sustainability benchmarks for properties that receive financial assistance from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

incentivize green building and preserve affordability as the debate over climate change continues," says Howard. "It would be terribly disappointing to see the good faith effort and collaborative work of the GREEN Act displaced with unworkable federal mandates as envisioned in H.R. 2454."

Howard informed lawmakers on the House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity that NAHB's members agree with the GREEN Act's approach, which will make sure cost-effective, energy-efficiency programs apply to HUD-financed homes. Howard also provided written testimony that highlighted steps NAHB members were taking to create sustainable housing and the education, certification and training programs NAHB has introduced to further these efforts.

"We have a major role to play in the manner in which energy efficiency and sustainable technologies are introduced into the housing stock," says Howard. "Despite the downturn, NAHB has not wavered in its commitment to promote green building and energy efficiency that is affordable and effective, and legitimately improves energy efficiency for the next generation of housing."

CLARIFYING THE GREEN ACT

Howard requested Congress rework some sections of the GREEN Act's text, as it remains unclear in the current draft if new efficiency requirements apply to Federal Housing Authority-financed home purchases in addition to direct subsidy programs or grants.

"The scope of the GREEN Act and the new programs that it creates is ambitious, but the intent is thoughtful," says Howard. "NAHB hopes that the resources will ultimately be available to develop the programs into effective tools to promote sustainable principles."

To find a Certified Green Professional or a local green-building program, visit www.nahbgreen.org. ■

Green Building Is Growing

While builders and remodelers take stock of their businesses, this spring has been the greenest building season yet, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

"We've said for a while that green building is a bright spot in a down market," says NAHB Chairman Joe Robson, a home builder and developer in Tulsa, OK. "However, the growth of the NAHB National Green Building Program exceeds even our most optimistic expectations."

More than 3,100 builders, remodelers and designers have earned the Certified Green Professional educational designation. Individuals must successfully complete 24 hours of instruction to receive the designation. NAHB also plans to unveil a Master Green Builder-Remodeler designation next year, which will incorporate additional building science and project management coursework.

More than 200 single-family homes, remodeling projects and developments in 43 states have gained National Green Building certification, in addition to the 300+ developments that are to be inspected.

"The NAHB Research Center has certified projects ranging from affordable starter homes to high-end custom homes with every conceivable amenity," says Robson. "This national certification program is clearly making green building more mainstream."

A Profile in Building Excellence

Name: Jack Zampell

Company: JackBilt Development Company, LLC

Title: President

Degree: Business Marketing, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga



Jack Zampell

JackBilt Development Company, LLC is an Atlanta-based corporation specializing in the design, development and implementation of home renovation and new construction. Started in 2001, JackBilt has established its reputation as one of Atlanta's premier construction firms, oriented in detailed design and affordability.

JackBilt is led by a highly experienced management team, each combining a unique blend of construction, renovation and real estate expertise to skillfully uncover hidden potential and deliver quality homes.

A former college athlete and competitive weightlifter, Zampell was instilled with a sense of hard work and dedication during his long hours of training and rigorous competition. Today, Zampell's tenacity and work ethic manifest themselves through his efforts as he leads JackBilt on the path to greater success.

Q: What are your primary responsibilities as president?

A: My primary responsibilities include acting as the general contractor, buying and selling property, overseeing day-to-day operations and bookkeeping.

Q: What are some of JackBilt's specialties?

A: As a design-build firm, we work with clients to create a custom renovation to fit their unique vision and individual need. Our renovations range in size and complexity to fit nearly every budget. Our past custom construction projects include interior renovations of all scopes and size, adding an addition, finishing basements,

adding a second story on an existing home and tearing down an existing property and starting anew. We also can build a new home on a client's existing lot.

Q: What is the hardest aspect of your job?

A: It has been difficult to get projects off the ground because lending institutions are locked up. Even if you have a great product, it's hard to get anything financed right now.

Q: In the current economic downturn, what are some of the ways JackBilt has been able to thrive?

A: We started doing smaller custom jobs and renovations, as opposed to constructing spec homes. This will keep our overhead low until the housing market can pick back up. Many times in an economic downturn, companies spread themselves too thin, trying to take on too many new

challenges. We know our strengths, and we stick to them. We've also received a lot of positive word-of-mouth referrals — it's how I get the majority of my business. When you keep clients happy, it pays off exponentially.

Q: Where do you see JackBilt in five years?

A: We will continue to gain strength. I'm only concerned with putting out a product that I can be proud of.

Q: What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

A: Be a winner. Stand for something. Always have class, and never trust a man in a bowtie.

For more information on JackBilt Development Company, visit www.jackbilthomes.com or call Jack Zampell at (404) 557-4188. ■



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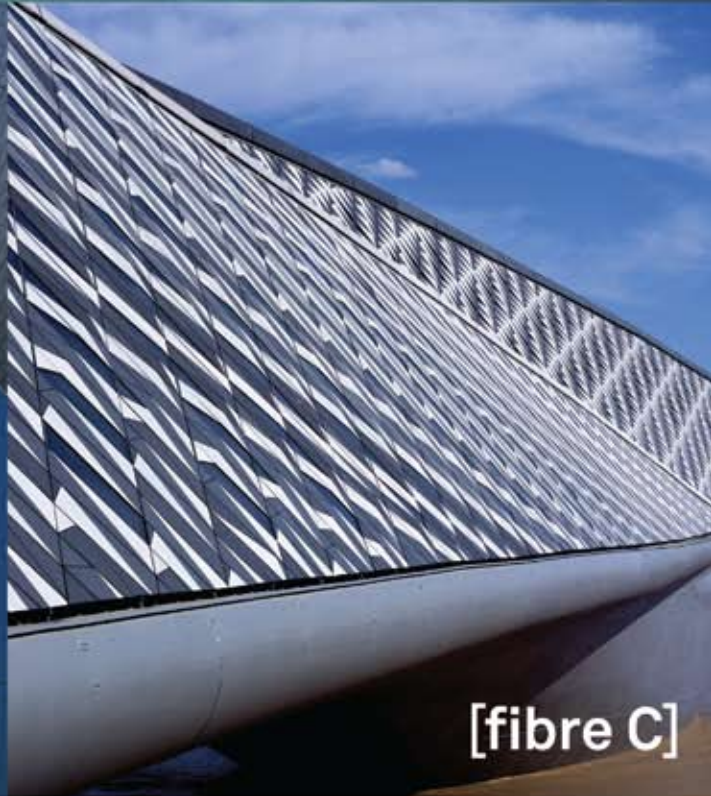
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