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Home of the Future Takes Top Honors: Local Builder Wins Home of the Year Award and Secures Sacramento's First LEED Platinum Certification

RJ Walter Homes, a Sacramento expert in green building and energy-efficient retrofits, has been awarded the Green Builder Home of the Year Award by Green Builder Magazine for its home in Folsom, CA. This news comes just days before the home received the first LEED Platinum designation in Sacramento, and only the third in the entire state of California. The environmentally focused builder partnered with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) to build SMUD's Home of the Future, a state-of-the-art bungalow that demonstrates the best and most practical energy efficient technologies.

"With all the features we put into it, we knew this home could outperform a lot of green homes," said Robert Walter, president of RJ Walter Homes. "But we want people to know how easy it is to live in and how easily it can be replicated in any home."

Located in the Sacramento suburb of Folsom, the home is designed to deliver total energy bills, including electric and gas, of just \$24 per month. The home's energy generation features, such as the solar panels and the solar hot water system work in concert with other energy efficiency features to enable the home to produce almost as much energy as it uses and leave a very small carbon footprint. In addition to the LEED certification awarded by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), the home has garnered an NAHB National Green Building Program Gold rating.

The 1,940-square-foot bungalow and its accompanying unattached casita feature the very latest energy efficiency innovations including:

- solar electricity and solar hot water
- 2 inch by 6 inch advanced framing to allow more room for insulation
- advanced water based air conditioner
- very tight and conditioned attic space and walls
- LED lighting

A home automation system remotely controls the home's lighting, thermostat, and window blinds to maximize energy savings. The estimated monthly combined energy

bills to total less than \$24 a month compare very well with \$140 for a home built to current new-home standards, according to NREL. The house is built so tightly that it will be easy to heat or cool no matter what the outside temperature.

Even the home's construction follows guidelines designed to preserve the environment. The framing was pre-made at a local facility instead of being built on site, which reduced a lot material and debris waste typical of new home construction. The team also took great pains to make sure that all materials were recycled when possible. The new bungalow is built in historic old town Folsom among older homes and replicates the design of its neighbors. The unattached casita includes a 720-square-foot guest quarters in the upper level and a garage below. The home was completed in September and its sale is pending on contingency for \$625,000.

About US Green Building Council and the LEED rating system:

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a non-profit organization committed to expanding sustainable building practices. USGBC is composed of more than 15,000 organizations from across the building industry that are working to advance structures that are environmentally responsible, profitable, and healthy places to live and work.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria. LEED is a third-party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings.

About RJ Walter Homes

A Northern California based home builder, RJ Walter Homes has the experience, construction knowledge, and passion for building energy efficient and sustainable homes that meet homeowners' needs.

By partnering with the National Renewable Energy Lab, U.S. Department of Energy, and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District RJ Walter Homes has become an expert in sustainable and eco-conscious building and remodeling practices for new homes. It is dedicated to providing energy efficient, livable and desirable spaces that not only provide lower energy bills and a healthier living environment for its homeowners, but a lower impact on communities as well.