

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 10, 2009

Contact: Patty Schenker, (608) 834-4598

Stoughton homeowners occupy net zero energy home: Additional proposals now being accepted for net zero homes

STOUGHTON, WIS., December 10 – Homeowners John and Rebecca Scheller recently completed a net zero energy home (NZEH) that combines state of the art, energy efficient construction and appliances with renewable energy systems through WPPI Energy’s GreenMax Home initiative.

A NZEH is one that produces as much energy as it consumes, yielding a net zero impact on the nation’s energy supply. Through the GreenMax Home initiative, the Schellers built their home in the WPPI Energy member service territory of Stoughton Utilities and encourage others interested in reducing their carbon footprint to apply for funding to help build or renovate a home with net zero energy use.

“WPPI Energy is committed to helping customers save energy and be more efficient in their use of energy,” said Senior Vice President of Customer Services and Administration Tom Paque. “Saving energy is the most important thing we can do to keep customer bills down, protect the environment, and defer the need for new power plants.”

To date, two GreenMax Homes have been completed in the WPPI Energy member service territories of Black River Falls, Wis. and Stoughton, Wis. The Schellers worked with Shaw Building & Design, Inc. and WPPI Energy to construct their NZEH, which was finished in November 2009. The couple will collaborate with WPPI Energy and Stoughton Utilities to share their experiences and monitor their energy use. In Black River Falls, after five months of recorded energy use, Tom and Verona Chambers’ home continues to produce more energy than the homeowners consume, putting them on track to reach their 12-month net zero energy goal.

“We’re excited about our new home, and we’re looking forward to achieving net zero efficiency,” said Rebecca Scheller. “Our family and friends are amazed by all of the ‘green’ features in

our house, but they're especially impressed by how the classic design of the house would allow it to easily fit into any of their own neighborhoods.”

The Schellers used readily available building materials to demonstrate the ease of building a cost effective, highly energy efficient home. They paid careful attention to details, such as insulation and air sealing, while using standard building practices and materials comparable to most average homes today.

The couple’s attention to details will deliver energy savings for years to come. Among 11,000 homes tested through Wisconsin Energy Star® Home testing, the Schellers’ home places in the top one percentile for air tightness.

“The Schellers’ home emphasizes one of the most important goals of the GreenMax Home initiative, which is to demonstrate practical ways that anyone can save energy at home,” said Stoughton Utilities Director Robert Kardasz. “We’re pleased to welcome the second GreenMax Home in the Stoughton Utilities service area and work with the Schellers to meet their net zero energy goal.”

The Schellers’ home also incorporates innovative and sustainable features, including LED lights with dimming technology, two geothermal heat pumps to provide space conditioning and domestic hot water, and an onsite solar photovoltaic system.

The Schellers, WPPI Energy and Stoughton Utilities anticipate holding an April 2010 open house celebration in conjunction with Earth Week. In the meantime, as a new round of GreenMax Home funding is now available in WPPI Energy member communities, the couple hopes to encourage others to consider building or renovating a NZEH.

“We look forward to continuing to be responsible stewards of our earth's resources and educating others to consider clean energy alternatives,” said Scheller.

The GreenMax Home initiative encourages residents, like the Schellers and Chambers, to incorporate energy efficient and renewable energy technologies in the design and construction of their new and existing homes. To assist with such projects, WPPI Energy is now accepting competitive proposals from energy conscious homeowners and builders in WPPI Energy member service territories to help fund up to three NZEHs. Proposals for the GreenMax Home initiative are due by 4 p.m. on Feb. 26, 2010. For more information, visit www.greenmaxhome.com.

#

WPPI Energy is a regional power company serving 51 customer-owned electric utilities. Through WPPI Energy, these public power utilities share resources and own generation facilities to provide reliable, affordable electricity to more than 192,000 homes and businesses in Wisconsin, Upper Michigan and Iowa. Visit online at www.wppienergy.org.