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## Green Building Know-How

Strategies for success

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Florida City Gas<sup>™</sup>  
Virginia Natural Gas<sup>™</sup>

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**Green Affiliation** Key ways to add green to your market appeal

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**CORRECTION** In the Summer 2007 issue of EnergyWise, Aavanti Building & Development was incorrectly noted as building "hurricane-proof" houses. Aavanti builds hurricane-resistant homes. A quote attributed to President Mark Petroni indicated the homes were built like a safe room. Petroni clarified that with the company's location and hurricane-resistant construction, a separate safe room is unnecessary since the whole house is fairly safe. We regret the error.

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Rinnai® combines comfort and energy efficiency

Doing Our Part

Green building is moving rapidly into the mainstream in the residential market. AGL Resources applauds this direction, as a company committed to our customers, communities and the environment.



Donna N. Peoples

Through our six natural gas utilities, we're focused on bringing customers comfort and value. The goals of green building programs — to make homes resource-efficient and cost-effective with the amenities homebuyers desire — are ones we enthusiastically embrace. We're also proud that the clean, efficient natural gas we provide contributes to a better environment by helping to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gases. In fact, natural gas can shrink a home's carbon footprint by up to 40 percent over electric.

It all translates to added advantages for building with natural gas. Many green home guidelines, including the national programs, use ENERGY STAR® for New Homes as the standard for energy efficiency. Natural gas heating and appliances can meet ENERGY STAR requirements affordably, for green homes that offer year-round comfort while saving energy and the environment.

To get a current glimpse into the green building industry, we talked to experts from various programs. There's good news about flexible options and comprehensive resources to assist builders going green. We also polled builders constructing environmentally friendly homes for insights and practical advice to target customers. Together with a discussion of the latest advances in products and techniques, we're providing a snapshot of this evolving landscape.

Whether you're an experienced green builder or just heading down the green path, this issue of the EnergyWise looks at ways to fully tap the potential of this market. We hope you find this information as enlightening and inspiring as we found the builders and others involved with green building in their dedication to a better, greener future.

Your partner in green building,

Donna N. Peoples  
Vice President, Sales and Marketing

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natural gas the cleaner, greener choice™

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# On the Green Home Front

By Kacey Cloues

## GREEN BUILDING PROGRAMS OFFER EXPERT ADVICE

**A**ccording to the 2006 McGraw-Hill Construction Residential Green Building SmartMarket Report, green homes will represent an estimated 10 percent of new residential construction by 2010. As green building practices are becoming more mainstream, existing programs provide a wealth of resources to assist builders of all sizes interested in capturing this market.

By recent counts, there are more than 80 green home building programs throughout the country. ENERGY STAR®, the U.S. Green Building Council and the National Association of Home Builders offer nationwide programs for energy efficiency and green building. Earth-Craft House™ is a regional program available in the Southeast. Common among these four programs are requirements for ENERGY STAR certification and independent verification of home performance.

MaGrann Associates, an energy consulting and design firm in Moorestown, New Jersey, has been involved with ENERGY STAR for New Homes since its inception and was selected as one of 12 providers nationwide for the U.S. Green Building Council's green home program. According to Robert Wisniewski, senior technical consultant with MaGrann, "Qualifying for ENERGY STAR is a great way to get started in green construction to become familiar with the industry and certification process."

### ENERGY STAR for New Homes

ENERGY STAR is the government-backed program from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy. It has been the standard for energy- and resource-saving home appliances since its launch in 1992, and it was first applied to new single-family homes in 1995.

ENERGY STAR for New Homes focuses on five areas of residential construction: insulation, windows, building envelope, heating and cooling equipment, and ducts and lighting and appliances. "Qualifying homes must be at least 15 percent more energy efficient than ones built to the 2004 International Energy Conservation Code," Wisniewski says. "They're also 20 to 30 percent more efficient than traditionally built homes."

Builders can sign on as ENERGY STAR partners for free. Homes must pass inspection by an independent home-energy rater, and charges can vary. "For an average 2,300 square foot home, average fees for qualifying are around \$350," according to Wisniewski, noting the first steps to building an ENERGY STAR qualified home are to become an ENERGY STAR partner and to contact a home-energy rater to verify the plans. More information about ENERGY STAR is available at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

### LEED for Homes

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system was established in 1998 by the U.S. Green Building Council, a Washington-based, nonprofit coalition of building professionals. From the success of the LEED rating system for commercial buildings, a pilot test for LEED for Homes began in 2005.

Developed by a diverse group of building-industry experts, LEED for Homes establishes benchmarks for the performance of green homes



*A LEED-certified home by Hedgewood Properties fits the environmentally friendly surroundings in Woodstock, Georgia.*

according to best practices and proven technologies. New homes built according to the LEED guidelines are designed to be in the top 25 percent in the nation in their efficient use of natural resources and quality of their indoor environment.

LEED for Homes measures performance in eight categories, and ENERGY STAR certification is a minimum requirement for energy efficiency. The system makes it possible for homes built anywhere in the country to obtain a green LEED rating. Wisniewski explains, "By using a performance-based approach, rather than a prescriptive one, LEED for Homes allows for differences in local market conditions."

Homes are rated as meeting one of four increasing levels of environmental performance: Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum. The program charges \$150 to register and a \$50 per home certification. Additional fees are incurred for plan reviews, site inspections and tests. According to Wisniewski, "Charges can range from about \$500 to \$2,000 or more, depending on the home's size and location and the rating sought. A sampling protocol for multiple copies can be used to bring the cost down per unit for production builders." To learn more about LEED for Homes, visit [www.thegreenhomeguide.org](http://www.thegreenhomeguide.org).

### NAHB National Green Building Program™

The National Association of Home Builders — a trade association whose members build 80 percent of the nation's new housing



*This thermographic image shows missing insulation and demonstrates a diagnostic tool used by MaGrann Associates.*

— is launching NAHBGreen in early 2008. The program follows on the success of the NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines launched in 2005, which laid the groundwork for local green building programs for members and will serve as the basis for the first and only consensus-based, ANSI-approved residential green building standard.

“NAHBGreen is a certification and verification program aimed at the mainstream builder,” explains Calli Barker Schmidt, director of environmental communications. “It’s designed to keep green building affordable and accessible, which is vital to market acceptance.”

There are three levels of certification in the program with points earned in seven areas, including the efficient use of resources, indoor environmental quality and homeowner education. To be certified, homes must meet energy-efficiency levels at least equivalent to ENERGY STAR. NAHBGreen also has an online scoring tool and the flexibility to take into account local issues, architecture and geographic differences. More information about NAHBGreen is available at [www.nahbgreen.org](http://www.nahbgreen.org).

## EarthCraft House

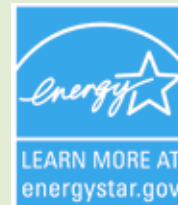
Established in 1999 by the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association with Southface Energy Institute and industry and government partners, the EarthCraft House program is a leading source for green building certification in the Southeast. The program focuses on building in mixed-humid climates and promotes practices that reduce utility bills, protect the environment and improve indoor air quality. EarthCraft House operates in Georgia, Virginia, Alabama, South Carolina and Tennessee.

To be certified, a home must pass ENERGY STAR criteria and earn additional points for site planning, energy-efficient techniques and equipment, waste management, and indoor air quality. “EarthCraft House gives builders the flexibility to choose the measures most practical for their homes,” says Joshua Duckwall, Multi-Family/EarthCraft House operations manager for Southface, which promotes sustainable homes, workplaces and communities through education, research, advocacy and technical assistance.

Qualifying as an EarthCraft House builder involves joining the program, completing a one-day training program, and building at least one EarthCraft House a year. There is an annual program membership fee. Inspection charges for certifying a house are based on home size. “The minimum cost for certifying an average 2,300-square-foot Earth-Craft House can typically range from about \$250 to \$500,” Duckwall says. Learn more about EarthCraft House at [www.earthcrafthouse.com](http://www.earthcrafthouse.com).

## NATURAL GAS: A STAR PERFORMER

As the standard for green home building programs nationwide, reaching for the ENERGY STAR® is cost-effective with natural gas. That means homebuyers can enjoy the comfort and convenience of natural gas heating and appliances with the added value of energy savings.



For water heating, natural gas is fast and energy efficient. “By using less energy, natural gas tankless water heaters and high-efficiency tank-style models contribute to the reduced environmental impacts of a certified EarthCraft House™,” says Southface’s Joshua Duckwall. “Efficient natural gas furnaces also enhance home energy performance,” Duckwall adds.

MaGrann Associates’ Robert Wisniewski finds high-efficiency natural gas heating helps homes qualify for ENERGY STAR economically. Another alternative, geothermal heating, can cost up to several times more than a traditional HVAC system and requires the ability to install underground piping or wells.

While ranges and clothes dryers are not currently labeled under the ENERGY STAR program, models using natural gas offer homebuyers cost savings and convenience. According to the American Gas Association, cooking with natural gas costs about half as much as electricity, and clothing dries up to twice as fast in a natural gas dryer than an electric one.

Along with meeting the requirements for ENERGY STAR and other high-performing homes, natural gas is nearly twice as clean as coal-fired electricity with 45 percent fewer emissions. That means it helps to reduce greenhouse emissions, smog and acid rain. Natural gas is also three times more efficient than electricity. Around 90 percent of the natural gas produced is delivered to customers as useful energy. By contrast only about 27 percent of the energy converted to electricity reaches customers — a turn-off for environmentally conscious homebuyers.

## Proof Positive

Gaining expertise in more than one program can broaden a builder’s customer base with each program’s following, as well as offer other advantages.

Georgia-based Hedgewood Properties has built many residences according to EarthCraft House and ENERGY STAR standards, but it recently received its first LEED for Homes certification for a new house in its Woodstock Downtown development.

Hedgewood’s Ben Shapiro says the LEED certification process had the added benefit of confirming the performance of the heating and cooling systems in Hedgewood’s other homes. “The combination of efficient natural gas heating and well-designed and properly sealed ducts is key to the quality Hedgewood builds into our homes. The additional testing for LEED certification was further proof of how well these systems perform in all of our homes,” Shapiro explains. 🌱



*The first EarthCraft House™ in Tidewater, Virginia, built by Miller Custom Homes.*

# Blazing a Green Trail

By Jack McGee

MILLER CUSTOM HOMES IN VIRGINIA IS A GREEN BUILDING PIONEER

**A**s the green movement is just now taking hold in the building industry, Miller Custom Homes has been constructing green homes for years. Owner Chuck Miller has personally built over 50 custom homes, incorporating green elements into them all.

“Chances are, if you bought a house from us in the last five years, it would qualify under a green home building program,” Miller says. He notes the most popular environmentally friendly features of his houses are high-efficiency appliances, a well-insulated home envelope and energy-saving windows.

A local leader in the green home movement, Miller Custom Homes was the first builder in Hampton Roads to participate in EarthCraft House™. When the green building program was introduced in Virginia in 2006, Miller immediately saw the benefits. “EarthCraft House gave us the opportunity for outside testing and a way to certify the quality we build into our homes,” Miller explains.

Miller Custom Homes unveiled his area’s first certified EarthCraft House at Homearama 2007, the Tidewater Builders Association’s annual custom home showcase. Featuring 17 furnished and landscaped homes by premier custom builders, Homearama was

held in Chesapeake, Virginia, and hosted 114,000 visitors during two weeks in October. The certified EarthCraft House won a Critic’s Choice award for Best Special Feature for its green roof and a People’s Choice award voted on by attendees.

“People told me they drove for hours just to come and see our green home,” Miller recalls. “One person was almost in tears thanking me for building it. They really connected with what we’re doing to build homes that are healthier and better for the environment.”

The green features in Miller’s EarthCraft certified home include ENERGY STAR® natural gas appliances; low-E double-pane windows; engineered and renewable wood flooring products; recycled carpeting; a conditioned, heated and cooled crawlspace; and energy-efficient framing methods. Two living green roofs covered with soil and vegetation reduce storm water run-off by capturing rainfall and using it to maintain the life of the plants.

**“We’re showing it’s possible for builders and homeowners to make decisions that are good for the environment without sacrificing style or comfort.”**



Even with its emphasis on energy efficiency, the certified EarthCraft House also encompasses all the beauty and luxury that is a Miller Custom Homes trademark. The 5,350-square-foot home sports five bedrooms and four-and-a-half baths, including upstairs and downstairs master suites, and is appointed with details like decorative inlays in the wood flooring, intricate tile work, and state-of-the-art systems and equipment. The outdoor living area has a large pool and fully-equipped kitchen.

“Building green can be beautiful,” Miller quips, noting his vision for the company is to remain a truly custom builder. “Our homes are one of a kind; we don’t reuse a plan over and over again,” Miller says. He personally supervises the construction of every home Miller Custom Homes builds, keeping in close contact with homeowners from the design stage through completion.




*Living green roofs are covered with soil and vegetation to be enjoyed as an expansion of the home’s yard areas. This type of roof reduces storm water run-off and aids in filtering pollutants out of the air.*

Virtually all of the houses by Miller Custom Homes are outfitted with natural gas cooktops, tankless water heaters and gas logs. Now building exclusively to Earth-Craft House standards, Miller installs natural gas heating where geothermal heating isn’t an option due to property size or conditions or expense considerations. Miller explains, “People expect a natural gas range and fireplace. Natural gas tankless water heaters are requested more and more, and we also install natural gas clothes dryers. It’s what has become the standard in the high-end market where we’re building.”

Miller says that his mission has always been to build custom green homes and maintain the highest level of customer service while doing it. “We’re showing it’s possible for builders and homeowners to make decisions that are good for the environment without sacrificing style or comfort,” Miller states. He even broadcasts his commitment to the environment on a monthly radio show called “Living in the Green.”

“Right now I’m the only custom builder in our market committed to building 100 percent green homes, but I have a feeling that won’t last long,” Miller says. “Obviously I want to keep my niche in the market, but I know that ultimately green building is better for our entire industry, and I welcome that.”

For more information, visit [www.millercustomhomesonline.com](http://www.millercustomhomesonline.com). 

## GOING GREEN INSIDE AND OUT

**Inside**, Miller Custom Homes creates a comfortable and healthy environment by insulating with spray polyurethane foam.

According to owner Chuck Miller, spray polyurethane foam is a liquid insulation pumped through a pressurized nozzle. It expands as it lands, filling cracks and seams to form a continuous insulating barrier that reduces air and moisture infiltration more effectively than fiberglass or cellulose.

Compared to traditional insulation materials, spray polyurethane foam insulation has the highest R-value per square inch. It won’t shrink or settle and keeps out dust and pollen. It’s also resistant to insects and fires and contains no formaldehyde or ozone-depleting chemicals.

Green building programs give spray polyurethane foam high marks for enhancing energy efficiency and indoor air quality, while customers enjoy how well it maintains desired temperatures and humidity levels in their homes.

“With our home envelopes so well sealed, we install natural gas water heating and furnaces that vent directly to the outside. That way our homeowners can have comfort and efficiency along with high indoor air quality,” Miller says.

**“...we install natural gas water heating and furnaces that vent directly to the outside.”**

**Outdoors**, Miller Custom Homes uses composite decking as an alternative to traditional wood and a resource-friendly material.

Miller explains composite decking is typically made by recycling wood-industry by-products — for example, waste from the cabinet and hardwood floor industries — and blending them with some form of plastic. The plastic often contains recycled content such as milk jugs or plastic grocery bags.

“Composite decking combines the look of wood with the durability of plastic. It’s splinter-free and has excellent traction, so it’s great for high-traffic areas — like in front of the natural gas grill,” Miller says.

A long-lasting product, some composite decking can carry warranties of 25 years. Green building programs generally rate the environmental friendliness of composite decking according to the length of its life-cycle and percentage of recycled content.



## ENERGY STAR partners have free access to an online marketing toolkit, brochures, fact sheets and outreach campaign materials.

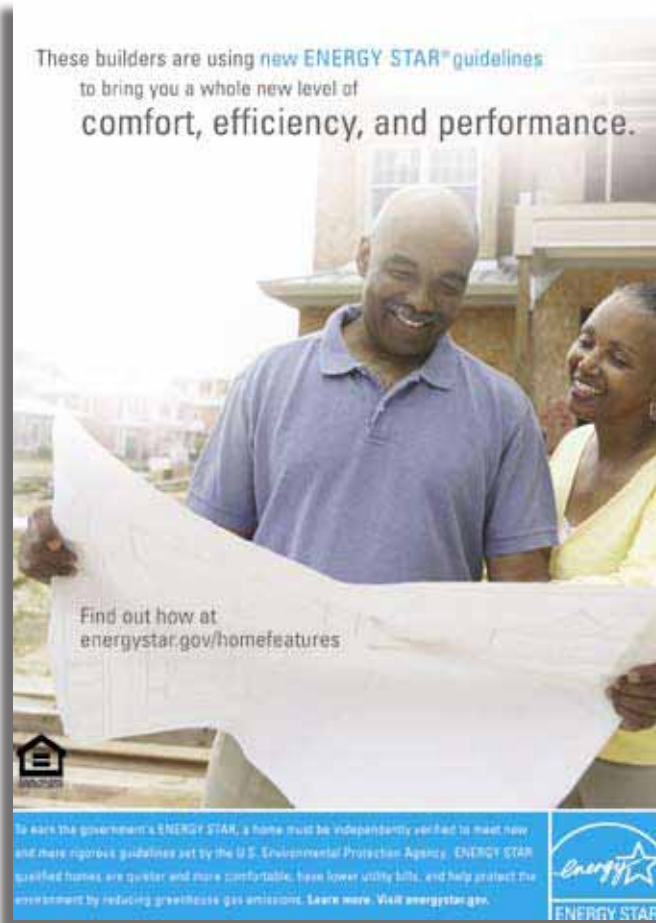
invaluable tools for builders. ENERGY STAR partners, for example, have free access to an online marketing toolkit, brochures, fact sheets and outreach campaign materials. The program also gives partners the opportunity to have links to their websites from the ENERGY STAR site, which provides a source of prospective leads. These built-in marketing resources and brand recognition help builders attract buyers interested in going green. Public awareness of the ENERGY STAR label is now over 65 percent, according to a recent nationwide survey. "It's a label the American consumer recognizes and understands, and that can be valuable to builders," says Jonathan Passe, communications coordinator for ENERGY STAR residential programs. To date, more than 5,000 builders are partnering with ENERGY STAR and nearly 850,000 ENERGY STAR qualified homes have been built across the United States.

Maione Homes, a leading builder of luxury custom homes and communities in northern New Jersey, committed four years ago to offer only ENERGY STAR homes. Andrew Grabis, field manager for Maione Homes, says homes that meet the program's standards appeal to their buyers because they are more efficient. "Typically, (buyers) are moving from houses that were expensive to own, and they want homes to offer lower maintenance and energy costs — along with all the amenities," he says. The builder uses ENERGY STAR promotional materials to explain the cost savings to customers, as well as personal accounts from current green homeowners and tours through green homes, to explain the steps that are taken to make them more efficient.

In addition to national programs, builders also can partner with regional programs for similar incentives. EarthCraft House™, for example, is a green building program in the Southeast that has certified more than 5,000 homes since its inception in 1999, according to Sean Bleything, field operations manager for EarthCraft House. The EarthCraft House program also offers marketing materials such as logos, yard signs and brochures to green building partners. And it goes one step further by helping train agents on how to sell a certified Earth-Craft House.



Virginia's Miller Custom Homes takes a creative approach to green marketing. Instead of logs, this natural gas fireplace uses a bed of tempered and tumbled glass, which also helps retain heat.



ENERGY STAR® outreach materials can be customized with builder names. Along with advertising costs, builders share in the benefits of ENERGY STAR's widespread name recognition.

Haven Properties, a builder of luxury, high-performance, semi-custom homes is one of the first builders in Atlanta to offer 100 percent EarthCraft House homes. "We saw the advantages of green building early on because we are always trying to improve our methods and deliver a better home to our buyers," says Tori Ewing, vice president of corporate communications and marketing for Haven Properties. The builder focuses on the health and environmental benefits of construction and materials used in green building that attract about 50 percent of buyers. Haven Properties touts the use of formaldehyde-free insulation and a fresh-air ventilation system for healthier indoor air; energy-efficient appliances; and a termite elimination system free from chemicals. "Green building adds value in so many ways to the homes and lives of our customers. It means they can have a beautiful home with all the amenities that also helps protect the health of their families and the environment."

John Ainslie, co-owner of Ainslie-Widener, a custom and neighborhood home builder and developer in Virginia, agrees buyers are equating green building with quality. Ainslie-Widener recently committed to building EarthCraft House homes. But the change actually meant maintaining the high standards already in place. "For the most part, we were already using materials and construction methods that would meet EarthCraft House standards," Ainslie says. "We see a growing awareness of the benefits of green building among homebuyers, and our association with EarthCraft House is a way to tap into this market."

Advertising the financial benefit to buyers is key to reaching the

green market. The green homeowner survey found the No. 1 incentive to buy a green home is the lower operating and maintenance costs. High-efficiency natural gas furnaces with programmable thermostats and tankless natural gas water heaters are among the most popular choices for green homes. Jeff Dinkle, president of Eco Custom Homes, a leader in sustainable custom homes in Atlanta, says offering natural gas heating is the most economical choice. "There's no better way to cost-effectively deliver on our standards for comfort and efficiency in the high-performing homes we build," he says.

Dinkle not only believes in equipping his homes with green products, he also is well-versed on the value of educating his staff and buyers about the benefits of green features in environmentally friendly homes. Green buyers surveyed cited a lack of education and awareness as the most significant obstacle in purchasing a green home, so Dinkle says builders who approach and educate buyers about green homes will succeed. His website offers links to green services, a blog and presentation slides on green homes, and buyers who visit his model homes walk away with a spreadsheet explaining the features of a green home and how much money buyers will save living in it. Dinkle also offers consultations and advice on environmentally friendly materials and techniques, such as installing natural gas. "You can either sit by and watch the trend, or you can get involved and keep yourself in the market," he says. 🌱

## The Green Homebuyer

A recent green homeowner survey co-sponsored by McGraw-Hill Construction and the National Association of Home Builders sheds light on the awareness of green techniques and practices among homebuyers, and the decision-making process in choosing a green home.

The large majority of green homebuyers — a striking 71 percent — are women, and 65 percent of green homeowners are married couples. The average age of buyers is 45. Most (79 percent) are college-educated, and nearly two-thirds have annual incomes over \$50,000. Interest in green building is greatest in the southern and western states. Typically, green homebuyers consider family and personal relationships as key values and are willing to spend time to get the best deal, the survey says.

Lower household operating costs top the list of incentives for buyers to go green, but environmental and health concerns are not far behind. Lisa Turner, owner of Angler Construction in Decatur, Georgia, began offering green renovations four years ago and has seen firsthand the increasing demand for green building options. She notes the parallels between her customers and the survey's findings. "People are becoming increasingly aware of green building options, and they're looking for builders who can show them how to make a difference," she says.



## FRONT RUNNER

New Jersey's K. Hovnanian® Homes™ sets the pace for value and efficiency

By Tara N. Wilfong

As the largest home builder in New Jersey and the sixth largest home builder in the United States, K. Hovnanian® Homes™ prides itself on delivering value in a wide range of home designs. "Value means more than price; it means building homes that use the latest technology and paying attention to the features that customers want and need," says Doug Fenichel, region director of public relations. "Our homes go beyond building codes to provide quieter, more comfortable living spaces that give customers a sense of quality and security that exceeds their expectations."

In 2001, K. Hovnanian began building its traditional wood-frame homes in New Jersey exclusively to the state's ENERGY STAR® Homes standards, a "logical next step in home-construction technology," according to Fenichel. K. Hovnanian was the first major builder in New Jersey to make this commitment and accomplish it without passing on any additional costs. Earning the ENERGY STAR label ensures K. Hovnanian homes are tighter, quieter and more comfortable. Fenichel explains, "The advantage customers remember most is the savings: one-third on heating and cooling bills over the life of the home."

Complementing the ENERGY STAR label, K. Hovnanian only uses natural gas in all of its New Jersey homes and many of its homes throughout the rest of the country. Natural gas for heat, hot water, cooktops and dryers is standard, and has garnered quite a favorable response from homebuyers. "People appreciate our work toward energy efficiency and sustainability," Fenichel says. "It has set us apart in the marketplace not only as a home builder, but as a corporate citizen 'walking the walk' for our customers and the environment."

For more information on K. Hovnanian, visit [www.khov.com](http://www.khov.com).





Before



After

## A Green Makeover Success

By Jack McGee

NEW JERSEY'S ANTHONY JAMES CONSTRUCTION GIVES A HOME RENOVATION STAR QUALITY

**A**lthough the ENERGY STAR® label is most commonly applied to new homes, when a customer requested it for a renovation, Anthony James Construction achieved the transformation in characteristic style.

A custom home builder and remodeler, Anthony James Construction is also recognized for excellence in historic preservation, reflecting the company's craftsmanship and ability to meet homeowners' unique needs. It is a tradition that began with founder Anthony J. Cerami Sr. in 1952 and is carried on today by a second generation with owner Anthony Cerami.

"We've built a solid reputation in this market," Cerami says. "Our goal with each project is to exceed expectations, and that requires being an innovator and offering the latest products and approaches like green building."

Cerami positions his business to build green by including environmentally friendly measures — both standard and as options — in his proposals. He says building green is both a marketing decision and a natural outgrowth of the company's philosophy. "Being a market leader is about maintaining our edge and continuing to expand on our strengths in innovation, design knowledge and service."

All of those factors came into play when the company com-

pleted a major renovation that upgraded a house to ENERGY STAR standards. Usually reserved for new homes, even the ENERGY STAR program advises that it may not be practical for an existing home to qualify.

Cerami fielded the request when he reviewed the benefits of ENERGY STAR with a customer before it was decided the home would not be torn down completely. Accepting the challenge, he consulted with experts and found it was possible for a renovated home to qualify for ENERGY STAR. "We were able to fulfill all the requirements, and the homeowner loved the result," Cerami says.

Recommending ENERGY STAR heating and appliances is standard practice at Anthony James Construction. "Energy efficiency is a big selling point for us along with natural gas," Cerami explains.

Natural gas heating is most requested by customers, and natural gas water heaters, dryers and cooktops are other favorites. Cerami recently began suggesting gas lights. "They're really starting to take off," he says. "It's a very charming look, and with the electronic ignitions they add to a home's character while using the latest technology. We've found that to be a winning combination."

For more information, visit [www.anthonijames.com](http://www.anthonijames.com).

## BUILDING A GREEN BRAND



For Anthony James Construction, going green goes beyond how homes are built. It is a way of communicating the company's commitment to innovation and market leadership.

The company's brand identity is defined under the banner, "We're Going Green." According to owner Anthony Cerami, "The 'We're Going Green' emblem is displayed on our trucks and our website next to the U.S. Green Building Council logo. We also use it in all advertising and printed materials."

Cerami finds his best marketing tool is the company website, which includes a link to ENERGY STAR® online resources. The company also benefits by placing signage on every ENERGY STAR qualified home Anthony James Construction builds.

Further ensuring the company stands out from the rest is a unique and award-winning innovation — Anthony James Construction house wrap. Similar to the white wraps commonly seen on homes before siding is installed, the wrap garnered a Hanley Wood *Remodeling* magazine

marketing award in 2003. By protecting against moisture and air infiltration and improving energy efficiency, the wrap aligns with the company's green brand while promoting awareness of the company on site.

Additional plans include a brochure detailing the company's green building capabilities. "It's all part of our strategy to gain exposure and recognition as a green builder and an innovator in the area," Cerami explains. "We're doing new things that the public is looking for, and this is helping us get the message out there."

# Building a Greener Future

By Jack McGee

COLLIER CONSTRUCTION IN TENNESSEE BUILDS QUALITY HOMES THAT LAST



*Natural gas is integral to Collier Construction's green approach to building.*

When Collier Construction was launched in 2002, company president Ethan Collier knew he wanted to operate differently than the average builder.

"On a typical home, most of the major components need to be replaced within the first 50 years," Collier says. "We offer a house that will outlive the average one in all categories, and our goal is to build a 100-year home."

Collier's aim is to create lasting structures and an enduring legacy in the Chattanooga, Tennessee, area. To make this vision a reality, Collier Construction uses science-based, industry-best practices, always seeking new methods, information and materials to create the ever-better structure.

According to Collier, high-performing homes are designed and constructed as integrated systems. He illustrates with an example of how a whole-house approach to energy efficiency results in a better indoor environment. "The energy efficiency measures on our homes, like a tight home envelope and conditioned crawl space, help eliminate drafts and also inhibit mold growth by controlling humidity. In addition to reducing energy use, they work together to create a more comfortable space and cleaner indoor air," Collier explains.

Collier's ideas about building are a natural fit with green

building programs. "Building a quality home that has longevity ultimately serves the environment," he points out. "So in a sense, we were always building green." Collier Construction offers customers the option of home building and certification according to various industry standards, including ENERGY STAR® for New Homes, EarthCraft House™ and LEED for Homes.

Collier considers natural gas to be integral to his green approach to building. The company installs natural gas heating and appliances because they're preferred by customers and offer high energy efficiencies. "Our customers appreciate quality and sustainability, and they request natural gas for their homes, primarily for heating, cooking and water heating," he says. "They want their homes to be comfortable and energy efficient, and natural gas delivers on their expectations."

Natural gas fireplaces are another requested feature in Collier Construction's homes. "Customers love the convenience. We install direct-vent models to preserve indoor air quality — which is important with the tighter construction of our homes — and because they prevent heat loss through the chimney."

Collier finds building green is an effective way of communicating what differentiates his homes. "Without a doubt it's something that people understand," Collier explains. "If we go



Collier Construction's customers enjoy the convenience of natural gas fireplaces.

**“If we go into the art and the science behind how we build, people don't know what we're talking about. Building green is something they can relate to, and they know it means quality.”**

into the art and the science behind how we build, people don't know what we're talking about. Building green is something they can relate to, and they know it means quality.”


According to Collier, “Promoting our green building capabilities has been huge for us. It's been the thrust of our strategy, and we use the green building element in all our marketing materials and our website.” Collier points to his company's website as its single biggest marketing tool. “People tell us our site has been the main way they learn about us, and we know the number of jobs we've gotten through it.”

In many ways, green building and the Internet are a perfect match for Collier's customer base. “People interested in this kind of construction tend to use the Internet,” he says. “They are doing their own research, looking for different products they want to use in their house. When they go to look for green

builders in Chattanooga, we are right there. And once they find our website and see what we are doing, it really sets the stage.”

Collier Construction's scientific approach, combined with the latest green building advances, results in measurable advantages for homeowners. But staying ahead of the curve is always challenging and by no means easy. Collier laughs as he acknowledges that his crews often fail their framing inspections at first.

“But it's not because of code violations,” he explains. “It's because we are using advanced framing techniques the inspectors are not familiar with. As soon as we explain the process and the technique, we pass the inspection. I suppose we'll just keep failing until all the inspectors are up on the newest methods of building a high-performance home.”

For more information, visit [www.collierbuild.com](http://www.collierbuild.com). 

## Green Building Tips

Collier Construction takes a wall-to-wall approach to building green homes with lasting value. The very structure of the homes is energy efficient. When constructing walls, the company uses advanced framing techniques to reduce the number of studs without compromising structural integrity. Because studs have a lower resistance to heat transfer, measured as an R-value, they decrease the overall R-value of the walls. Advanced framing techniques improve the walls' energy efficiency by using fewer studs and creating more room for insulation.

“We started doing it about three years ago,” says Ethan Collier, president of Collier Construction. “We can more than double the R-value of the entire house this way. It also eliminates unnecessary waste of natural resources by reducing the amount of wood used.”

To extend the life of their homes, Collier Construction protects exterior walls against a major source of deterioration. “Moisture is the No. 1 cause of wall and insulation failure,” Collier explains. “And no matter how well it's sealed, moisture is going to get inside a wall.”

Their methods include preventing moisture penetration and allowing any moisture that enters to escape. When installing siding, Collier Construction leaves a gap between the outer layer of the building wrap and the back of the siding. That way, any water that intrudes can drain to the outside of the building and circulating air dries the back of the siding, reducing the potential for water damage and mold.

Moisture is also a consideration when choosing insulation. “In colder zones, insulation with a vapor barrier helps prevent water damage, but in our climate it can trap moisture in the wall,” Collier says. Where outside temperatures are colder, water vapor from a warm interior condenses when it meets cooler outside air, and water damage can result. “The higher temperatures and humidity in Southern climates make unfaced insulation a better choice because it allows any moisture entering the home from the outside to escape,” he notes.





*Perry and Pat Tanner enjoy their custom-designed kitchen with natural gas range in Woodstock, Georgia.*

## Environmentally Friendly

By Kacey Cloues

ATLANTA-AREA HOMEOWNERS CREATE THEIR PERFECT HOME WITH HEDGEWOOD PROPERTIES

**B**ack in the summer of 2006, Pat and Perry Tanner were not excited about building a new home. "After spending a couple of months visiting various new developments in Metro Atlanta we became discouraged with the cookie-cutter subdivisions where most homes looked similar and poor-quality craftsmanship seemed prevalent," Perry recalls. With retirement on the horizon, the couple wanted to find the perfect place to enjoy their golden years. They are quick to point out, however, that they were not looking for a so-called retirement community. "We wanted to live in a place that had families with kids, young couples, middle-aged folks, you name it," Perry says. "We wanted a community that was full of life, where you know your neighbors, and where you could park your car and just walk everywhere."

Turns out, the Tanners found exactly that in the new Hedgewood Properties development, Woodstock Downtown. Tucked into the heart of historic Woodstock, the north Atlanta community affords residents the cultural, entertainment and business opportunities of a major urban center but is far enough removed from the hustle and bustle of downtown to foster a small-town quality of life.

As a champion of the New Urbanism movement, Hedgewood is devoted to designing pedestrian-oriented, human-scaled developments that seamlessly mix retail, residential, business and recreational spaces to create the ultimate live-work-play communities. All the homes are built to exacting standards and in a variety of historically based architectural styles. Additionally, each Woodstock Downtown residence is a certified EarthCraft House™, which means they are energy- and water-efficient, saving money and valuable natural resources. "We had become quite cynical

about building a new home," Perry says. "But after visiting Woodstock Downtown and seeing the mix of shops, restaurants and parks, we decided this was a concept we could really get excited about."

But settling on a community is only half the battle. Pat and Perry had heard horror stories about new homebuyers' experiences with builders and approached the task with skepticism and trepidation. What they encountered with Hedgewood, however, couldn't have been further from their fears. "The entire process was such an unbelievably pleasant experience," Perry says. "Without exception, our experience could not have been better. Every Hedgewood employee was not only very professional and responsive, but focused on making certain our new home was exactly what we wanted, reflecting our priorities and desires."

One of those desires was a chef-style kitchen. The Tanners have an affinity for creating culinary masterpieces, and they look forward to spending lots of time in the kitchen when they retire. They installed a high-end, professional-grade range powered by natural gas and boasting six burners, dual ovens and a griddle. The Tanners' more than 200 cookbooks are stored on shelves beneath the bar and kitchen island that were custom-built by the folks at Hedgewood. In the courtyard behind the house is a top-quality natural gas grill.

Hedgewood also worked with the Tanners to accommodate Perry's height. At 6 feet, 10 inches he towers above standard shower heads, crouches to get through doorways, and hunches over counter tops. Hedgewood installed a 7-foot, 6-inch-high shower head in the master bathroom and raised the vanity top to 42 inches. "It was really a nice touch that they were able to install those special features," Perry says. "It's just one more way that this feels like *our home*, not just a house." Natural gas heating and water heating complete the home as a haven of comfort.

Other special design features that make this home a dream come true include the stereo system and media center. Now, Perry says, he can listen to any of the more than 10,000 songs on his MP3 player anywhere at home with the whole-house audio system. Their big-screen TV disappears behind custom-built doors when not in use — something Pat insisted on, Perry says with a grin — and surround-sound speakers are discreetly installed in the ceiling.

But the crown jewel of the Tanners' new home is its architecture. Pat and Perry have long loved the refined elegance and stately charm of Charleston's historic homes, and Hedgewood worked with them to bring



**For the perfect finishing touch, the Tanners installed raw copper natural gas lanterns on the brick columns on the front of their house and on the wall in the rear courtyard.**


**HEDGEWOOD**  
THIS IS HOME.

this vision to life. For the perfect finishing touch, the Tanners installed raw copper natural gas lanterns on the brick columns on the front of their house and on the wall in the rear courtyard.

It is this meticulous attention to detail that has won Hedgewood numerous awards, including Builder of the Year by the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association, the coveted National Builder of the Year Award from *Professional Builder Magazine*, the Best in American Living Platinum Award from the National Association of Home Builders, and year after year of commendations from the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association. Founded in 1985 by the husband and wife team of Don Donnelly and Pam Sessions, Hedgewood has earned its reputation as one of Atlanta's premier home builders.

A steadfast commitment to environmentally responsible building practices and an unwavering focus on the livability of both individual residences and entire communities set Hedgewood apart from the competition, garnering it national recognition and scores of interested buyers. Perry says that it was the company's uncommon development approach and high standards of building that really drew him and his wife to Woodstock Downtown. "There's such an emphasis these days on getting exercise and fresh air and not depending on your car so much," he says. "This community makes those things easy to fit into your life."

Hedgewood also has a keen ability to nurture the human aspect within its developments. While parks and green space are great for the environment, they are also natural social gathering spots. The same goes for the sidewalk cafes, pool and clubhouse, and active neighborhood association. Even the home designs contribute to the sense of community with their wide front porches and generous courtyards. "We'll go out for a walk sometimes and end up being gone for two hours without even making it off our street," Perry says, laughing. "Seriously, though, it's absolutely wonderful to live in a place where you know your neighbors and actually enjoy spending time with them. It's a real treat."

For more information, visit [www.hedgewoodhomes.com](http://www.hedgewoodhomes.com). 



# Climate Control

AGL Resources Helps Clear the Air

As a charter member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Natural Gas STAR Program, AGL Resources is among the first companies in the energy industry nationwide to commit to reducing greenhouse gases by curbing methane emissions.

The Natural Gas STAR Program was launched in 1993 to promote emission reductions and the sharing of best practices to save resources and contribute to cleaner air. AGL Resources has been recognized by the EPA for making significant reductions through the program and benefiting the environment.

"The results we have achieved through the Natural Gas STAR program reflect the concerted efforts of our team and our commitment to industry leadership on behalf of our customers, communities and the environment," says Hank Linginfelter, executive vice president, Utility Operations.

The EPA tracks green-

house gases that accumulate in the atmosphere and cause a number of environmental concerns, including smog, acid rain and climate change. Electric generation is responsible for the largest portion of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, according to the EPA.

Carbon dioxide is the principal greenhouse gas, accounting for about 84 percent of U.S. emissions. Methane, which represents approximately 8 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, results mainly from landfills and naturally occurring sources, like wetlands. It is also the major component in natural gas. Methane emissions from natural gas systems may occur as part of normal operations and routine maintenance and as a result of incidents.

"AGL Resources' six natural gas utilities take higher pressure natural gas from the interstate pipeline system, reduce the pressure at gate stations, and distribute the natural gas through underground mains and service lines to homes and businesses," explains Tim Goodson, managing director, Environmental Health and Safety and Crisis Management. For natural gas utilities, the major sources of escaping methane, dubbed "fugitive emissions," are gate stations, metering and pressure regulating equipment, and cast

## Results Count

Since joining the Natural Gas STAR Program through 2006, AGL Resources has achieved cumulative emission reductions of 590,151 million cubic feet of methane — the equivalent of 238,421 tons of carbon dioxide, which amounts to:



Carbon stored by **198,684 acres of forest** in one year



Removing **51,606 cars** from the road for one year



Electricity used by **30,606 homes** for one year



iron and unprotected steel distribution pipe, according to Goodson.

Among the best practices AGL Resources employs to reduce fugitive emissions are replacement of distribution pipe with plastic piping, which allows fewer emissions than other materials, and monitoring and replacement of leak-prone equipment.

While the majority of AGL Resources' results to date are from Atlanta Gas Light, in 2007 all of the company's utilities joined the program. 🌱

## Teaming Up for the Environment

AGL Resources is a team player on biogas projects, using the company's energy expertise to help bring a renewable form of natural gas to market.

Biogas is a methane-rich gas produced in the digestion of organic waste. Commonly released into the environment by landfills, wastewater treatment plants and farms, biogas can be captured and upgraded to natural gas standards, reducing air pollution and providing a valuable energy source.

A project currently being developed in Atlanta will use methane from the Live Oak Landfill in DeKalb County, Georgia. The gas will be cleaned up to remove carbon dioxide, moisture and other con-

taminants and injected into the pipeline system operated by AGL Resources' Atlanta Gas Light subsidiary for resale to customers.

"We are very enthusiastic about these projects for the many ways they benefit the environment by saving resources and curbing greenhouse gas emissions," says Donna Peeples, vice president, Sales and Marketing.

AGL Resources is pursuing opportunities to replicate this success across all markets served by the company's six natural gas utilities. Candidates include landfills and sewage processing plants that flare off methane gas and large livestock and poultry operations with waste lagoons.



As ENERGY STAR® partners, AGL Resources companies promote the benefits of natural gas for energy-efficient homes and businesses. High-efficiency natural gas heat-

ing and appliances lower energy costs for homeowners and help builders construct homes that offer comfort, convenience and energy savings. Efficient natural gas equipment supports businesses' bottom lines. Visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) for more information.



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**Keeping It Green:** *EnergyWise* is printed with green-approved, soy-based inks by a green compliance printer as certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

“Whenever possible, we work around the natural features of the land, showcasing them for our residents’ enjoyment.”

—Scott Miller,  
vice president of sales and  
marketing, The Viera Company



▶▶▶ broad-scope building

Viera’s trails and parks enable enjoyment of scenic areas while linking neighborhoods and businesses with a continuous greenway.

# Home on the Range

By Tara N. Wilfong

## THE VIERA COMPANY CREATES AN ENVIRO-FRIENDLY MASTER-PLANNED FLORIDA COMMUNITY

Tucked in the shadow of the burgeoning Florida Space Coast is a live-work-play community like no other. With environmental stewardship at its heart, Viera is a master-planned community that is the brainchild of the descendants of Andrew Duda, an immigrant farmer who came to Florida nearly a century ago. In the beginning, the Duda family cultivated a celery crop in Central Florida and later purchased the Cocoa Ranch in 1943, where they built a successful cattle and sod operation that continues today. “In the mid-1980s, as urban development began to encroach on the Dudas’ Cocoa Ranch, they started to think about doing something really special here,” says Scott Miller, vice president of sales and marketing for The Viera Company, the Duda Company’s wholly-owned real estate subsidiary and exclusive developer for Viera.

At the heart of the community is the Dudas’ strong connection with the land. When complete, Viera will consist of about 22,000 acres straddling I-95 in central Brevard County. With each phase of development, significant acreage is set aside for preservation of natural habitat and wildlife. “Our agricultural lifestyle, which has been ongoing for nearly 65 years, will continue on significant portions of the property,” Miller says. “Whenever possible, we work around the natural features of the land, showcasing them for our residents’ enjoyment.”

Today, Viera has approximately 17,000 residents along with shopping centers, churches, schools, a professional baseball stadium, a zoo, the Brevard County Government Center, parks and golf courses. In the town’s final phase of development — dubbed the West Viera Expansion Area — plans are in the works for a more compact residential and commercial footprint, allowing for significant green-space preservation. The centerpiece of the expansion area will be the 5,100-acre Viera Wilderness Park,

reflecting Viera’s emphasis on habitat management and land conservation.

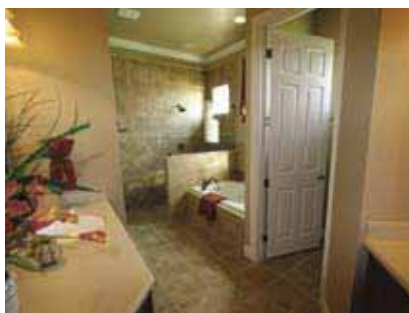
A strong commitment to residents is a hallmark of The Viera Company, demonstrated by the Eason Landing community, an enclave of 53 single-family homes being built by Viera Builders Inc., which incorporates pedestrian- and eco-friendly features. Its location is within biking distance to the 125-acre Viera Regional Park and community center, a driving range and golf course, shopping, movies and restaurants. Promoting the Viera community’s pedestrian-friendly design are 10-foot sidewalks and pedestrian underpasses, which allow residents to leave their cars at home.

In keeping with its parent company’s agricultural roots, Viera Builders elected to use natural gas in all of its Eason Landing homes. “Natural gas is such an efficient fuel that it was really in line with our philosophy for being good stewards of the land,” Miller says. “We take our responsibility to the land very seriously, so using a clean fuel like natural gas made perfect sense.” Homeowners in Eason Landing will enjoy natural gas cooktops and

hookups for their outdoor grills and water heaters, including the option for tankless water heaters, which only heat water as needed, instead of heating water in a tank.

While residents enjoy all the natural benefits Viera has to offer, there is one final perk that is but a stone’s throw from home: the Space Coast Stadium. Made possible through a land donation by the Duda family, it’s the spring-training facility for Major League Baseball’s Washington Nationals and the regular-season facility for the Brevard County Manatees. Miller says, “Our goal is to continually deliver a community that is not only sustainable, but also meets the goals and desires of our residents, while remaining environmentally conscious.”

For more information, visit [www.viera.com](http://www.viera.com).



With natural gas, homeowners have all the hot water they need in Viera’s Eason Landing.

# Complete Package

By Casie Morris

RINNAI® COMBINES COMFORT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY



As more and more homes integrate green technologies, homeowners are discovering the benefits of Rinnai® tankless water heaters. Not only do they minimize total environmental impact, they reward homeowners with energy savings without sacrificing lifestyle.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, water heating is the third largest energy use in homes. Helping to curb energy used for water heating, Rinnai Corporation, the largest gas appliance manufacturer in the world and North America's leading tankless water heater manufacturer, offers a replacement for the antiquated technology of hot water storage tanks.

Traditionally, water heaters hold a limited amount of hot water and constantly heat and reheat water in a storage tank. Rinnai's natural gas tankless units heat water on demand and store no water, eliminating standby loss and conserving a substantial amount of energy versus tank-style water heaters.

The environmental benefits are substantial. Compared to a traditional tank-style water heater, Rinnai has determined its tankless unit reduces carbon dioxide emissions by more than 25 percent annually. According to Rinnai, if the estimated 60 million homes in the United States converted to tankless water heaters, the nation would eliminate 51.7 billion pounds of carbon dioxide each year.

Rinnai tankless water heaters protect natural resources, not only through energy efficiency and water savings, but also in how they are constructed and in how their compact size reduces material in landfills. Over 10 years, Rinnai calculates the reduction on landfill load from eliminating storage-tank water heaters would be approximately 600 million pounds, which is equivalent to about 13,000 SUVs.

With their energy efficiency, long life cycle and space-saving size, Rinnai natural gas tankless water heaters help build greener homes.

"Natural gas tankless water heaters are an ideal combination of convenience and energy efficiency that's very appealing to homebuyers," says Mark Petroni, president of Aavanti Building and Development, a custom home builder and developer in Melbourne, Florida.

"Their smaller footprint also makes the best use of space, to maximize the value as well as the performance of our homes," Petroni says. "We install tankless water heaters in all our new homes in Coral Key for the energy savings they offer and our customers' comfort." 🏡



## ADVANCING GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

Ervin Cash, executive vice president of Rinnai® Corporation, is responsible for the overall management and development of Rinnai Corporation's North American operations including its tankless water heater, direct vent heater and fireplace/hearth product lines.

Cash has been instrumental in educating key staff at the U.S. Department of Energy and the Alliance to Save Energy on the benefits of tankless water heating to increase energy efficiency. His efforts contributed to the Department of Energy's decision in February 2007 to announce an ENERGY STAR® program for residential water heating.

A supporter of green building technologies, Cash has also worked to promote Rinnai's tankless water heaters to the building industry. Rinnai was recognized in 2007 by *Builder* magazine as "the most requested product of all building products," headlining the magazine's Builder Top 50 List for a third consecutive year. The company was also named the "coolest" product in new home construction by the Pacific Coast Builders Conference in 2004.

Rinnai Corporation is committed to promoting green building technologies and greater comfort for homeowners. "Reduced energy consumption and waste recycling are key goals of green building, and Rinnai tankless water heaters support both of these areas, along with the luxury of never running out of hot water," Cash says.

Rinnai North America, a subsidiary of Rinnai Corporation in Nagoya, Japan, was established in 1974 and is headquartered in Peachtree City, Georgia. For more information about the Rinnai Corporation and Rinnai tankless water heaters, visit [foreverhotwater.com](http://foreverhotwater.com).

# GO GREEN

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Homebuyers demand the comfort and energy efficiency of clean natural gas. It's why homes with natural gas command a 4% premium over similar electric homes. Because using natural gas helps reduce greenhouse emissions, smog and acid rain, it's also a responsible energy choice for environmentally conscious homebuyers. Visit [aglresources.com](http://aglresources.com) for more information.

**Natural gas – the cleaner, greener choice.™**



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Today's energy-minded homebuyers are sold on natural gas heating and appliances. From water heaters and cooktops to dryers and furnaces, natural gas homes are comfortable and efficient. Using natural gas appliances also helps reduce greenhouse emissions, smog and acid rain. That means homebuyers can enjoy year-round comfort at home while saving energy and the environment. Build with natural gas for greener homes and developments. **Natural gas – the cleaner, greener choice.™**



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