

ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES, THEY \$AVE...

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EPA'S ENERGY STAR HOME PROGRAM IS NOW IN EL PASO

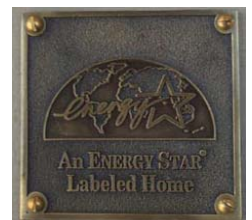
Finally, El Paso home buyers are going to enjoy the benefits of living in an Energy Star home. Yes, you are reading right ENERGY STAR®, just like the refrigerators, TV's, computers, and the list goes on. EPA's Energy Star actually was developed to label the homes as energy efficient, save the home owner money, make homes more affordable and reduce the pollution by using less energy and save the environment.

Homes that have earned the ENERGY STAR® label meet's EPA's strict guidelines for energy efficiency and are at least 15% more energy efficient than the rest of the homes being built in the State of Texas and at least 30% more, compared to homes in other states of the country. But what does this mean 15%, well actually an ENERGY STAR® home averages savings of \$420 annually on utilities. Also the Appraisal Journal said that for every \$1 of a home's energy savings the value of the home will increase by \$20, so the home will have higher resale value of \$8,400 by using the average saving.

Also ENERGY STAR® home buyers can use the Energy Efficient Mortgage, which will give them better interest, larger debt to income ratios and the possibility of living in a better more comfortable home that is less expensive to own and operate.

Everyone will benefit from ENERGY STAR® homes, the builder, the home buyer, the mortgage company, low income families, HIGH income families and of course THE ENVIRONMENT.

To learn more about ENERGY STAR® homes visit: www.swher.com or www.energystar.gov



"Buying a home that has earned the ENERGY STAR is like making a down payment on a cleaner world."

WHO WILL BUILD ENERGY STAR® HOME IN EL PASO

Right now the program is starting in El Paso and there are only few builders that have committed to test their homes and join the EPA's effort to build and record the energy efficiency of their homes. But I know that in oncoming weeks more builders will start testing, inspecting and certifying their homes to obtain the ENERGY STAR® label.

Southwest Home Energy Raters (SWHER) welcomes to the Energy Star Builders family of El Paso to:

- FORTUNE CUSTOM HOMES
- WINTON / FLAIR CUSTOM HOMES

* We are confident that El Paso is going to have more ENERGY STAR Builders in upcoming weeks.

DO YOU KNOW HOW ENERGY EFFICIENT IS YOUR HOME

What do we really know about energy efficiency? Everyone thinks that just by buying an energy efficient appliance or adding more insulation to the attic will do the trick... But the truth is that energy efficiency is more than that, of course that will help but there are much more important things to fix in a home, than buying a single Energy Efficient equipment.

The most important elements that determine the efficiency of a Home are the following:

- Insulation levels
- Window type
- Heating & Cooling Equipment
- Leakiness of the home (Air Infiltration)
- Leakiness of the duct system
- And of course home owner behavior...

These are only few of the things to take into account to determine how much energy a home is going to use every month.

The only way to determine how energy efficient a home is, is to perform a Home Energy Rating done by a professional Home Energy Rater, this specialist will gather all the necessary data from the home and the equipment, will perform an air infiltration test to the building envelope and a duct system test, and will give the home a score from 0 to 100, if the home scores 80 or higher it means that in fact the home is Energy Efficient, and if its lower the rater will come up with cost-effective measures to help you make your home more energy efficient.

I bet you wont know this... the good part is that the cost of the upgrades to make the home more energy efficient can be added to your mortgage payment without re-qualifying by using an Energy Improvement Mortgage.

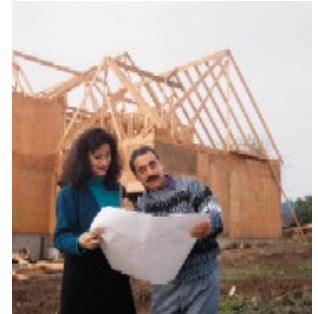
EL PASO HOME BUILDERS AND THEIR HOMES

I know there are more than a few builders that are already building highly energy efficient homes, but if they aren't testing their homes, they are giving it away. The builder, the home owner or buyer will never know for sure how energy efficient their homes are. The most common assumption is that only because they use high insulation levels and high efficiency HVAC systems their homes are in fact Energy Efficient.

The reality is that if they don't do an Air Infiltration Test and test their HVAC system for leakage they will be only guessing the energy efficiency level, and also they are giving away the opportunity to have evidence that the homes they build in FACT are Energy Efficient.

Also the testing will help them demand a high quality job each and every time, since now they will have a method to test and measure exactly how good of job their sub-contractors are doing.

YOU won't imagine the surprises that some builders have gone thru after the tests were performed, and they thought they were getting a HIGH quality job... NOW they have the means to know.... And probably the subcontractor will send their best crew because they know they will be tested and inspected...



“ Plan Review and a cost effective upgrade analysis before the construction begins is the best way to make a sure that your new home will be Energy Efficient.”

**“WHEN
YOU BUY
OR BUILD A
NEW HOME
KEEP THE
FUTURE IN
MIND”**



“Build tight, ventilate right”

HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Did you know that your home can be a greater source of pollution than your car? In fact, 15 percent of all greenhouse gases are generated from the energy used in houses nationwide.

Energy used in our homes often comes from the burning of fossil fuels at power plants, which contributes to a host of air pollution problems, including smog, acid rain, and global warming. Simply put, the less energy we use in our homes, the less air pollution we generate.

“Just one ENERGY STAR qualified home can keep 4,500 pounds of greenhouse gases out of our air each year.”



Help reduce pollution by using less energy.

“WHILE OTHER BUILDERS CLAIM THEIR HOMES ARE ENERGY EFFICIENT, ENERGY STAR PARTNERS PROVE IT”

THE IMPORTANCE OF WEATHERIZATION

Source: <http://www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/>

Today low-income families spend an average of 14 percent of their income on energy, compared with 3.5 percent for the average American. Weatherization reduces an average home's energy costs by \$218 a year. This is why is very important that the government promotes weatherization of low-income households. According to the Dept. of Energy for every dollar spent in weatherization you will have a \$ 1.40 in energy savings over the life of the improvements.

Other benefits include of a Weatherization Program are:

- Increase housing affordability

- Increase the value of the property
- Reduce the overall national energy consumption
- Job creation to perform the weatherization
- Among many other benefits for the local economy.

Weatherization is very simple — it improves energy efficiency and permanently reduces energy bills. Weatherization serves low-income American families that pay the highest percentage of their incomes for energy bills, producing long-lasting benefits for them and an economic boost for their communities.

We are on the web www.swher.com

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SWHER Services:

- Home Energy Ratings (HERS Reports)
- Blower Door Tests (Home Air Infiltration Test)
- Duct Leakage Test
- ENERGY STAR® Home Qualification
- Energy Efficiency Cost-effective analysis
- Will Help you obtain an Energy Efficient Mortgages
- Plan Review for Energy Efficiency
- 3rd. Party Building Inspections / Code Compliance



BUY A NEW HOME TODAY.
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT OF TOMORROW.
Find ENERGY STAR Builder partners in El Paso at:
www.swher.com

HELP YOURSELF AND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN
YOU BUY AN ENERGY STAR® QUALIFIED HOME.

ENERGY STAR qualified homes meet EPA's strict guidelines for energy efficiency. These homes provide greater comfort and durability while lowering utility costs. Energy efficiency also protects the environment by significantly reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. Learn more. Visit www.energystar.gov



The information contained on this newsletter was written and edited by: L.J. Ruiz from Southwest Home Energy Raters
Some information, statistics and quotations were obtained from the EPA's website at www.energystar.gov