

NEW GREEN STANDARD GREAT NEWS FOR HOME BUYERS AND BUILDERS, NAHB SAYS

The new National Green Building Standard will maintain the flexibility of green building practices while providing a common national benchmark for builders, remodelers and developers – another big step for the green building movement, said panelists today at a news conference during the International Builders' Show in Orlando, Fla.

The first and only true consensus-based standard for residential green building is in its final comment period and almost ready for prime time, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

The National Green Building Standard is expected to be approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and published by NAHB and the International Code Council (ICC) early this spring, a panel of builders and those involved in the standards process told reporters. The ANSI process ensures that the best technical reviews were used to create the standard.

On Thursday, NAHB members celebrated Green Day at the Show, which attracted more than 100,000 members of the home building industry in 2007. Green Day activities include the launch of NAHB's new green building initiatives, 200 green product exhibitors, and a full day's worth of green educational seminars, including a keynote address by noted architect and green building champion William McDonough.

The National Green Building Standard is based on the three-year-old NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines, but enhanced to include residential remodeling, multifamily building, and lot and site development--also the first of their kinds in the country. It also reflects advancements in requirements in the International Residential Code and other changes that serve as indications of the dynamic nature of green building.

Like the Guidelines that they are based on, the standard requires builders to include features in seven categories: energy, water and resource efficiency; lot and site development; indoor environmental quality and homeowner education. It also adds the higher Emerald Level to the Bronze, Silver and Gold certification levels for the Guidelines.

"The National Green Building Standard will make it easier for builders to build green. Having this information available in an ANSI standard means that it's in the language that builders don't need a special consultant to understand," said Miles Haber, a multifamily developer in Rockville, Md.

"NAHB's decision to transform the existing guidelines into a standard, exposing its work to the rigors of the ANSI consensus process and peer review, is yet another testament to the firm commitment the association has taken to support inclusive green building," said Michael Luzier, president of NAHB Research Center. The Research Center is an accredited standards developer and charged with shepherding the ANSI standard development process through a series of public hearings and comment periods.

The latest public comment period closed on Feb. 4 and more than 600 comments were logged. Consensus committee members, who represent all facets of the home building industry as well as government agencies and the environmental community, have until March 3 to register their votes on the public comments.