

## **CDC Earns Top Marks for Energy-Efficient Homes Built in Magna, Utah October 2007**

In a continuing effort to provide the best possible affordable housing, the Community Development Corporation of Utah (CDC) recently completed the construction of three new homes in Magna, Utah, that meet the highest ENERGY STAR building requirements.

Three dilapidated homes in Magna were razed and replaced with energy-efficient homes that received an exceptional “Five Star” energy rating based on ENERGY STAR criteria. The rating is determined by the overall efficiency of the thermal “envelope,” meaning how tightly sealed the house is, and also how efficient the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems are. An on-site inspection by a third-party Home Energy Rater is done and various calculations establish the score. The lower the score on the Home Energy Rating System (HERS) scale of 0 to 500 the better. Several factors contribute to the energy-efficient ratings of these homes including:

- Properly installed and inspected insulation in floors, walls, and attics.
- High performance windows incorporating improved frames and advanced protective coatings.
- Properly sealed holes and cracks throughout the house including the heating and cooling duct systems.
- Energy-efficient heating and cooling systems properly installed into a tightly sealed home.
- Third-party verification done by independent Home Energy Raters to ensure ENERGY STAR guidelines are being met.

Of the three Magna homes evaluated, two scored 67 and the third scored 72 on the HERS scale of relative energy efficiency. A score of 85 or less is required to achieve the highest rating. According to Jeff Hayden, CDC Construction Manager, “A numerical index is assigned after initial plan reviews, periodic site inspections, and final testing. The final test measures actual air infiltration from the outside and also from within the furnace and air conditioning ductwork.”

According to ENERGY STAR statistics, “ENERGY STAR homes result in lower ownership costs compared to standard-built homes because they use substantially less energy for heating, cooling, and water heating, resulting in \$200 to \$400 in annual savings. This averages out to thousands of dollars in saved utility costs over the course of just a few years.” This proves to be especially helpful for first-time homeowners who often cannot bear the financial burden of excessive utility costs.

“With no question we are seeing ever-increasing utility costs making it difficult for new homeowners to maintain their homes. Energy-efficient housing has a practical impact in

the lives of our families. It is the right thing to do from an energy consumption standpoint and it helps our homebuyers in the long run,” states Darin Brush, CDC Executive Director. Darin added that the ongoing policy of CDC is to continue building to ENERGY STAR specifications in all new-home construction projects.

CDC chose Magna to build these houses because of the great need for quality affordable housing that exists in that area. Magna is an old mining town in an unincorporated part of Salt Lake County in need of continued revitalization efforts due to the abundance of obsolete and often unsafe housing stock that is prevalent there. Various valued partners were engaged to help CDC continue its revitalization efforts in Magna including HUD, who sold CDC the homes through their Asset Control Area (ACA) program, and Morgan Stanley Bank who provided CDC with the needed financial backing. Salt Lake County once again partnered with CDC in this effort as they have done so many times in the past. With the county’s help, CDC has either rehabilitated or built over forty houses in the Magna area.

Construction of energy-efficient housing needs to be done by qualified professionals with a detailed knowledge of the ENERGY STAR criteria. CDC knew the expertise of long-time home building partner Performance Construction would be the best avenue to take and as always they poured their time and talents into their work resulting in a finished product that will provide years of satisfaction and energy-related savings for the future owners.



Taking to heart the mission of filling the needs of first-time homebuyers, CDC continues to move forward in search of the best home remodeling and new construction projects throughout the state. Doing so will help open more doors to potential first-time homebuyers in need of increased housing options in the affordable housing market. Building energy-efficient housing is a step in the right direction and one that shows that with the help of valued partners who share a vision of quality housing with CDC that energy-efficient homes can be built affordably.