

# Green building blooms at home

Trend enters residential realm as city offers incentives

Business Courier of Cincinnati - May 4, 2007

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The buyer of an Observatory Avenue home being built by John Hueber Homes may trade granite for stone, hardwood for bamboo flooring and drywall for full walls of windows.

These energy efficient measures, as well as a geothermal heating system, long-burning fluorescent lighting and use of indigenous plants will help Hueber earn **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design** certification and tax incentives from the city of Cincinnati. And he also hopes they help him sell the house.



The \$1.4 million home, a rare new construction among its aged Hyde Park neighbors, is one of four Hueber homes planned for the Hyde Park/Mount Lookout area that will employ green measures at urban in-fill sites. Hueber estimates he'll spend an extra \$40,000 on the home to meet the standards, but the investment will save the buyer on taxes and energy costs and will make his company more marketable.

"I believe it is the solution to global warming," said company president Hueber, who lives in a passive solar home he built 22 years ago. "The best thing we can do is to be conservative."

Hueber is following a national trend toward building green. A recent study by **McGraw-Hill Construction** predicts green building measures will be used in 10 percent of homes by 2010, up from just 2 percent today. And, green homeowners are 85 percent happier with a new green home versus their previous non-green one. That's likely due to the improved indoor air quality and lower heating bills.

The developers of downtown's Edge loft-style condominiums believe this will be the case for their project, now registered with the **U.S. Green Building Council** to become a certified project.

They'll employ a white reflective roof with a landscaped rooftop deck, an outer face of mostly glass to maximize daylight and recycled materials where possible.

"We believe there is a market that understands and wants it," said developer Andy Radin. "And it's the right thing to do."

Radin also plans to utilize the city of Cincinnati's new tax incentive program for LEED certified projects. It's still being defined, but the ordinance will likely reward homeowners with tax abatements and will help builders recover additional costs related to gaining certification.

### **Urban Green**

Efficient single-family homes built by Hueber can feature geothermal heating systems.

Interiors include natural materials such as stone counters and bamboo floors. Green amenities can cost thousands to meet standards.

