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NEWS RELEASE

5 “FIRSTS” FOR CALGARY ZERO ENERGY HOME

NET ZERO ENERGY CERTIFIED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LIVING FUTURE INSTITUTE (ILFI):

1. The 1st project in Alberta to achieve any level of certification through ILFI
2. The 1st Zero Energy Certified project in Alberta
3. The 1st Zero Energy Certified project outside the United States
4. The 1st Zero Energy Certified project in Canada
5. The 1st Zero Energy Certified project in climate zone 7 or higher (that’s cold!)

(Calgary, Alberta, Canada) The first home built in the community of EchoHaven was Zero Energy Certified on January 10, 2018. EchoHaven House is a single-family home and one of 15 high-performance houses completed in a planned, low-impact neighbourhood of 25 homes. The house was designed and built to produce as much energy as it consumes. The homeowners have documented their home’s performance since occupancy in June of 2012.

Kim Walton of Bow Crow Design says EchoHaven House is the result of an effective collaborative design process. “The project incorporates elegant simplicity and clever solutions that have raised the bar for sustainable homes. A client who loves their home is the true measure of a successful project.”

EchoHaven House uses no natural gas for heating or hot water. Instead, the house uses radiant electric heating, passive solar heating, solar thermal combined with on-demand hot water heating, a heat recovery ventilator, and greywater heat recovery. Renewables consist of a grid-tied 5.2 kW photovoltaic array and two solar thermal panels integrated with the exterior finishes. Extreme water conservation is achieved with low flow fixtures and rainwater collection/reuse.

Other strategies for reducing electrical consumption include LED lighting, energy efficient appliances including a condensing dryer to minimize heat loss through the envelope, cool pantry in the kitchen to reduce refrigeration needs, kill switches to reduce ghost loads, maximized day-lighting throughout the interior, and smart ventilation to eliminate the need for air conditioning.

The well-insulated, sealed building envelope and high performance fiberglass windows are key to the efficiency and comfort of the home.

Homeowner Dave Spencer says a tremendous amount of thought and research went into insulation, heating systems, renewables, indoor air quality, and most importantly how to keep building costs and electricity bills low. "What we didn't anticipate was how much we love the feel of the house... we could never go back to living in a standard house. The extra effort was the best investment we have ever made."

The interior of EchoHaven house is light-filled, comfortable and quiet. The goals of the design and building of EchoHaven House were to maximize the benefits of the south facing site, reduce the owners' ecological footprint, and use materials that made sense – locally sourced, recycled content, durable and healthy. Achieving Net Zero Certification is dependent on many factors: insulation levels, air-tightness, efficient operating equipment and appliances, weather, and not least of all – occupant behaviour. The owners love their home and have suffered no hardships in their journey to conscious consumption:).

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For more information:

<https://living-future.org/lbc/case-studies/>

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