



**2008 SOUTHERN LIVING  
IDEA HOUSE  
LEICESTER, NORTH CAROLINA**

**43%** improved energy efficiency over International Energy Conservation Code, according to HERS rating

**80%** builder's projected irrigation water demand reduction, compared to a conventional home

**50%** of construction waste diverted from the landfill

**LEED® Facts**

2008 Southern Living Idea House  
Leicester, North Carolina

LEED for Homes  
Certification awarded October 1, 2008

|                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Gold</b>                  | <b>77*</b> |
| Sustainable Sites            | 14/22      |
| Water Efficiency             | 10/15      |
| Energy & Atmosphere          | 21/38      |
| Materials & Resources        | 5/16       |
| Indoor Environmental Quality | 16/21      |
| Locations & Linkages         | 3/10       |
| Awareness & Education        | 2/3        |
| Innovation & Design          | 6/11       |

*\*Out of a possible 136 points*

The information provided is based on that stated in the LEED® project certification submittals. USGBC does not warrant or represent the accuracy of this information. Each building's actual performance is based on its unique design, construction, operation, and maintenance. Energy efficiency and sustainable results will vary.



## 2008 SOUTHERN LIVING IDEA HOUSE

# Green Living: A Great Idea

Idea House spreads the word on healthy, green homes

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

*Southern Living* magazine's yearly Idea House feature aims to inspire readers with ideas that can only be spurred by "touring" an innovative house inside and out. It's no surprise, then, that the 2008 Idea House in the Whisper Mountain development near Asheville, N.C., was built with LEED certification in mind. "This house proves that responsible planning and comfortable, achievable living can work hand in hand," the magazine wrote in its profile of the home.

## SEEING IS BELIEVING

The Davidson Gap home is a 3,085-square-foot, three-bedroom dream home in the 450-acre Whisper Mountain gated community. Featured in the August 2008 issue of *Southern Living*, the farmhouse-style home with complementary outbuildings – including a detached garage, cistern "pump house" and more – showcased to millions of people the benefits of a green home and how to achieve one. In addition to the 16-20 million readers who saw the home profiled in the magazine and online, more than 15,000 physically toured the home when it opened to the public. And experiencing firsthand the comfort, durability and style that are possible in a green home is a great encouragement to work toward a green home of your own.

## STRATEGIES AND RESULTS

The Idea House was built by EcoBuilders Inc. with a holistic, integrated approach, which was crucial to ensuring all the building and design professionals were on the same page with the home's green features. And those green features are numerous. The home's site was protected from erosion during construction with straw bales, and hardscaping features and swales were designed to prevent erosion into the future. The lot has a minimal amount of impervious surfaces to reduce water runoff. A yard planted with 100% native species, no invasive species, limited conventional turf and drought-tolerant landscaping will cut irrigation water demand by some 80%, the builder estimates. The carriage house's "living roof" aims to cut rain runoff and provide insulation, while a rainwater catchment system provides water to water-efficient dual-flush toilets inside the house.

The home has several features aimed at reducing the amount of energy used and getting as much of that energy as possible from more sustainable sources. A solar water-heating system is backed up by a high-efficiency tankless water heater. This system also acts as the home's primary space-heating source. A super-tight envelope supported by agri-based open-cell foam insulation throughout the house and 2-inch rigid foam under the basement slab help maintain the home's indoor temperature even as the weather changes outside. A zoned heating and cooling system allows residents to maintain a comfortable temperature in rooms where they spend their time but avoid wasting heating and cooling energy in empty parts of the house. And the home is stocked with ENERGY STAR®-rated appliances and lighting. A solar photovoltaic array produces electricity that is sold directly to the local power company.

Special framing techniques helped builders use less lumber while preserving the home's structural integrity. The walls were panelized offsite in a factory, reducing waste, ensuring quality and maximizing space for insulation. And indoor air quality is protected by the use of low-volatile organic compound (VOC) paints and finishes and an energy recovery ventilator that introduces measured, HEPA-filtered fresh air mechanically. And the detached carriage house keeps vehicle pollutants distant from the house.

## ABOUT THE SOUTHERN LIVING IDEA HOUSE

Southern Living creates its Idea Houses to inspire readers. It strives to show readers homes that look as if the owners have just stepped out. Each year, it features three houses that offer unique ideas, smart design tricks and comfortable interiors.

"Between 16 and 20 million *Southern Living* readers will see this project. Some 15,000-plus people will tour the home. A portion of those people will learn about LEED for the first time or expand their understanding about LEED. The homeowners will live in a home that is healthier for them, with reduced utilities, that is more durable, and will have a lesser impact on the environment as compared to a conventionally built home."

Rob Moody, president, EcoBuilders



**Builder:** The EcoBuilders  
**Developer:** Whisper Mountain, Ltd.  
**Architecture:** Allison Ramsey Architects, Inc.  
**Interior Design:** Traci Kearns, Alchemy Design  
**Landscape Design:** LaQuatra Bonci Associates  
**LEED for Homes provider:** Southface Energy Institute

**Project Size:** 3,085 square feet  
**Buildings:** 2  
**Bedrooms:** 3  
**Photography Courtesy of:** Rob Moody

## ABOUT LEED

The LEED® Green Building Rating System™ is the national benchmark for the design, construction, and operations of high-performance green buildings. Visit the U.S. Green Building Council's Web site at [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) to learn more about LEED and green building.



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