

Durham Custom Homes Completes First Fully Accessible GreenHouse

Durham Custom Homes celebrated the completion of the first fully accessible home in Ontario that is built to GreenHouse™ standards on Thursday, April 2.

The home was customized to allow a person in a wheelchair to utilize the house with as much ease as an able-bodied person.

Durham Custom Homes worked closely with Dennis and Melissa Radovic to build a home to suit the needs of the couple and their four year old son Bryson. The Radovics saw a newspaper article last fall about accessible homes being built by Durham Custom Homes.

"They really were prepared to customize everything for us," said Dennis, who was pleasantly surprised how open the builder was to their design and material changes.

"The process was smooth and we are thrilled with the finished product," Melissa added. What was key was the experience Durham Custom Homes has in designing and building accessible homes. The energy efficiency features and lower environmental impact that their house will have was also a key factor in their buying decision. "The natural resources of our planet are limited, and we all have to do our part."

The home features a three-stop elevator with access from the garage, basement and main floor of the bungalow. The kitchen has been widened, with a lowered counter, sink and stovetop with no drawers or cupboards underneath to allow a wheelchair under the counter. The kitchen pantry has slide out shelves for easy access, and the oven from the side and has a pull out Corian counter underneath. The hallways, entrances and doors are all wider for easy maneuverability. The floor plan itself is optimized for ideal flow. Both bathrooms are larger and ¾" plywood placed behind the drywall allows for the installation of grab bars. The master ensuite has a barrier free shower and his and hers sinks.

"They are raising the bar once again," said Corey McBurney, president of EnerQuality Corporation. "This is an industry that has embraced innovation."

To achieve the GreenHouse certification, the home must meet Energy Star® version three standards, which requires a home to achieve a minimum rating of 80 on the Energuide scale. In comparison, a home built to the current Ontario Building Code has an Energuide rating of approximately 75. In addition to meeting the Energy Star requirements, a GreenHouse must also meet other specifications.

"It's like Energy Star on steroids," commented Oshawa mayor John Gray at the opening.

The builder must submit a plan to an independent, government certified



From Left: John Neal, Regional Councillor, City of Oshawa; Louise Parkes, Local Councillor, City of Oshawa; Kim Craitor, MPP Niagara Falls, Parliamentary Assistant to Minister of Community and Social Services; new homeowners Melissa and Dennis Radovic; Jeff Goldman, principal of Durham Custom Homes; Victor Fiume, general manager of Durham Custom Homes; Jerry Ouellette, Oshawa MPP; and Oshawa Mayor John Gray.

consultant that includes information on how the home will be constructed, the materials it will use and how the waste will be reduced and diverted. During the building process, all materials that can be recycled must be separated at the source, and the intent is to divert 25 per cent of the normal waste from a construction project. The home must use 10 per cent less lumber than a traditional home, and many of the materials, including the paint, garage doors, shingles, concrete, window frames and drywall must meet a certain level of recycled content.

A GreenHouse must also achieve higher indoor air quality, and reduce the potential for problems down the road. The builder must use a higher quality furnace air filter and ensure all of the air in the house is effectively directed through the filter. Systems, including proper sealing, are used to limit moisture and prevent mould.

Water conservation is another component of a GreenHouse, and is achieved through the use of dual flush toilets, flow restricting aerators and showerheads, and Energy Star dishwashers.

Durham Custom Homes, a private company owned and operated by the Goldman family, has been building homes in Southern Ontario for almost 60 years. The company won the 2007 Excellence in Technical Innovation Award from the Durham Region Home Builders Association for its construction techniques and was named Energy Star Builder of the Year and GreenHouse Builder of the Year 2008 by the EnerQuality Corporation.

"The enthusiasm has been contagious," says Jeff Goldman, principle of Durham Custom Homes. "We continue to strive to build better homes and better communities."

The Kingsway Forest sales office is located in the Hampstead model home at 591 Oxbow Crescent (Townline Rd. north of Adelaide to Kettering, west on Kettering to Aldershot then follow signs to model homes). The sales office is open Monday to Friday 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Weekends & Holidays 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For more information, please call (905) 576-6771 or visit the website at www.KingswayForest.ca.

