

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Steve Dubin, PR Works, (781) 582-1061, sdubin@prworkzone.com

WORKING HEADLINE: How to create your dream green home.

DATELINE: ORLANDO, FL and MERRILLVILLE, IN...

Outside of Barry and Susan Sitkoff's home sits six cans of recyclables and one bag of trash, however; their passion for living green goes far beyond their curb appeal. As a hydrogeologist at NASA, Susan walks the walk of an environmentalist, routinely performing environmental cleanups and assessments as part of her job. So when it came time for Barry and Susan to build their new home, green was the natural direction—it was just a matter of how.

“Green homes are healthier, safer, more comfortable and cost less to operate,” said Susan Sitkoff. “They connect people to the land and community around them.”

In May of 2008, the Sitkoffs officially began the process of building their dream green home. It started by attending a green building workshop at DirectBuy of Orlando South where they learned about the different green construction methods and products available. Having already researched retail pricing for their green products, the couple saw the significant cost savings they would experience with a DirectBuy membership and sought membership that same day.

“For the most part, everybody wants to live greener, but there's a cost associated with that,” said Brian Cohen, owner of DirectBuy of Orlando South. “At DirectBuy, our members are buying directly from the manufacturer. That can result in significant savings on green products up front so you can run your home more efficiently and save on energy costs on the back end.”

With the assistance of DirectBuy's product specialists, the Sitkoffs made their purchases with quality and efficiency in mind and created a “greener than green” dream home. Here's what went into their dream green home:

Walls – Constructed with Eco-Block, an insulated concrete form containing three inches of foam on the outside, three inches of foam on the inside and a solid three-inch concrete core. Building with ECO-Block can save homeowners up to 50 percent on energy cost. Eco-Block has other significant benefits, including: reduced noise transmission; resist the growth of mold or mildew; can be built to any seismic or hurricane-storm standard; and has an up to a four-hour fire resistive rating.

Attic – A closed cell foam was installed on the roof deck while an AC feed and return were installed in the attic without roof vents to prevent energy loss and allow the Sitkoffs to use their attic as living space – something that is virtually unheard of in Florida.

Windows - Double-pane, Low E windows were installed throughout the house. Double-pane windows (not to be confused with double-hung windows) have two panes of glass, and can reduce heat loss by 50 percent or more. In addition, the Low E glass used (the E stands for emissivity) minimizes the impact of direct sunlight by reflecting heat back to its source. The Sitkoffs further reduced the impact of direct sunlight by designing their home with north and south facing patios.

Garage Door – A steel-back insulated garage door with R-15 insulation was used to provide excellent thermal performance. R-15 high density insulation consists of more fibers per square inch, resulting in a higher R-value per square inch in less space than standard insulation products.

Toilets and Faucets – The Sitkoffs installed low-flow toilets, showerheads and faucets that should reduce water usage by 50 percent.

Water Heater - A gas on-demand water heater was installed instead of the typical hot water heater that continuously heats the water in the tank. A tankless hot water heater, like the one installed, can reduce energy usage while making hot water available by turning on the tap.

Appliances – Their gourmet kitchen was equipped with all Energy-star rated appliances, including a 48-inch dual fuel (electric oven gas range) with a six-burner top and a warming drawer to provide heat with less power than the oven to keep food at a perfect temperature.

Lighting - All of the lights have dimmers or Eco-bulbs. Eco-bulbs have the following benefits:

- High power factor means less distortion on the electricity network
- Last up to twice as long as other energy-saving bulbs
- Reduce green house gas emissions
- 15,000 hour life - the equivalent of either 14 standard bulbs or three average energy-saving bulbs.
- Recyclable packaging
- Very low amalgam content used in production

Flooring – Carpeting with recycled content was installed, as well as natural stone (travertine floors and bathroom tile with granite countertops for the kitchens and bathrooms). Natural stone flooring and tile are sustainable choices that will last many lifetimes.

The Sitkoffs completed their dream green home in June of 2009. Since moving in, they spend \$100-\$150 less a month on electric than their neighbors with the same size home.

“We might have spent a little more to build green but in the long-run, we will save substantially,” said Barry Sitkoff.

And the greening of their dream home is far from over.

“The next thing on our list to buy is an energy rated washer and dryer that will reduce power usage even more,” said Susan Sitkoff. “And the next big project will be installing rain barrels to capture rainwater to use for irrigating our planned greenhouse. We will continue to look to DirectBuy for all our green products.”

Since 1971, DirectBuy clubs across North America have helped consumers enjoy enormous savings on home furnishings, home improvement items, entertainment and outdoor products, and accessories, by providing an avenue to purchase directly from the manufacturer. In addition, each DirectBuy club employs product specialists and designers who can help members create the home of their dreams.

DirectBuy Membership

Consumers who are interested in joining DirectBuy are encouraged to attend an exclusive Open House event, which is designed to educate families about DirectBuy’s unique business model. The Open House also helps consumers better understand how DirectBuy members avoid traditional retail markup when purchasing brand-name merchandise.

To request a "Free Insider's Guide to Buying Direct" and a Visitor’s Pass to learn more about the superior value and benefits of a DirectBuy membership, visit www.directbuy.com.

About DirectBuy

For more than 38 years, DirectBuy has been showing hundreds of thousands of consumers unparalleled ways to save as they shop for virtually everything for in and around their homes – from furnishings, home improvement and flooring, to entertainment and outdoor products, accessories and much, much more. With more than 160 locations in North America, DirectBuy offers its members access to approximately 700 brand-name manufacturers and their authorized suppliers in the United States, and more than 500 brand-name manufacturers and their authorized suppliers in Canada .

Consumers interested in seeing DirectBuy’s savings, service and selection up close may obtain a Visitor’s Pass to attend an Open House by visiting www.directbuycares.com.