



HOMESTyle

Elegant living — set clearly above the rest.

Fall 2007

CUSTOM CONSTRUCTION & REMODELING

GREEN HAS ALWAYS BEEN A COLOR OF CHOICE AT SUMMIT. WITH INCREASING CONCERNS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN GENERAL, THE CONCEPT OF GREEN BUILDING IS GAINING SIGNIFICANTLY MORE POPULARITY—ESPECIALLY IN AREAS OF ELITE CUSTOM HOME CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING.

JUST WHAT EXACTLY IS A GREEN HOME?

Definitions abound, but according to the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), a green home is one that uses less energy, water and other natural resources; creates less waste; and provides healthier living environment for its residents.



Smart use of window design and placement can add ambiance and reduce utility costs.

Sustainable construction is about exceeding building codes and using quality materials and technology. This benefits the owner as well as the environment.

GREEN SINCE THE BEGINNING

Creating environmentally-friendly homes has always been central to Summit's philosophy of designing exteriors that blend with the landscape and interiors that utilize sunlight and other factors to add ambiance and also keep utility costs manageable.

"I've seen that the leading exclusive custom builders take a more comprehensive view of green building than builders in general," explained Monte Viker, Summit partner. "Sustainable construction is about always exceeding building codes and using the highest-quality materials and technology. Doing so will decrease both energy use and the need for repairs and renovations that would be costly to both the owner as well as the environment." Other green-related materials and processes that exclusive builders typically utilize include:

- Engineered lumber (made from by-products) for sub-floors, roof joists and wherever possible.
- Alternative high efficiency heating and cooling systems such as geothermal technology.
- Using the latest insulation techniques such as sprayed-on closed cell foam, shown here, that nearly doubles the insulating factor.
- Exceeding standard practices to ensure high-quality air exchange for more comfortable living and also to prevent build up of mold and allergens.
- Staying abreast of the latest technologies—for example, a current Summit client is considering several alternative heating and cooling options as part of a \$1 million-plus renovation of a local farm.



Closed-cell insulation significantly increases the "R" factor.

Along with all of these active steps, there are passive approaches that make good environmental sense. Ensuring proper site location is also

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ABOUT SUMMIT For over 25 years we've been southeastern Minnesota's clear leader in elite custom homebuilding. Our success springs from a commitment to craftsmanship, artistry and authentic style.

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- Custom Construction
- Custom Remodeling
- Home Maintenance

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nothing new in Summit's philosophy. In the pre-construction phase, Viker and his partner Jack Gabor will visit the lot at different times during the day and evening to be sure that the design, location and actual positioning of the home will help their clients enjoy the ambiance they deserve.

They also carefully plan to keep as many trees and other natural features as possible, and utilize exposures and window positioning to support heating or reduce air conditioning demand.

"Elite builders spend a lot of time considering the impact even things like driveway length and location can have on the sustainability of the lot and home," explained Viker. "Will what you do keep or eliminate natural features for a view or solar gain?" ☆



For more information on sustainable building practices and incentives, go to www.SummitCustomHomes.net/news.htm or contact:

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MINNESOTA GREENSTAR
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MINNESOTA GREENSTAR

Just launched, this program will support both new construction and remodeling. A project that is registered and meets requirements will be certified as a Minnesota Green Home or Green Remodel.



Minnesota GreenStar's five key concepts of green remodeling include:

- Energy Efficiency
- Resource Efficiency (including Durability)
- Indoor Environmental Quality
- Water Conservation
- Site Management and Use

GREEN INCENTIVES

Incentives from the state of Minnesota, the federal government and energy companies are available to support sustainable building practices. They include:

- Mortgage and home equity rate discounts
- Rebates on building materials and products
- Preferred utility rates
- Preferred homeowner and health insurance rates
- Grants

IS GREEN BUILDING AT THE TIPPING POINT?

Quite possibly—and it's definitely true that today's market place makes sustainable construction a more realistic choice for residential and commercial property owners.

The USGBC reports that average green construction savings range from up to 30% on energy costs, 35% on carbon emissions, 30-50% on water use savings and 50-90% on waste costs.

Green building fees average 3-5% more than standard building practices, and the costs are typically recovered with energy savings over 3-5 years. Owners benefit from lower utility costs, and commercial property owners report being able to rely on higher lease rates from tenants.

LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (LEED)



This nationally-based new construction certification program is based on six key criteria:

one / Site selection and planning

four / Materials and resources

two / Water efficiency

five / Indoor environmental quality

three / Energy management

six / Innovation and design

All Summit Homes will be tested and certified as part of the LEED program. Summit has retained the Minneapolis-based Building Knowledge Consulting Group (BKCG) to ensure they meet both Minnesota Green Star and LEED criteria.



"We've found that these programs and their incentives are highly effective in helping clients benefit from sustainable construction practices while receiving a fairly rapid return on their investment in green materials, processes and technologies," explained Ed Von Thoma, BKCG president.

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