

LEED(TM) Canada Certification Now Available for New Homes

New green home rating system provides health and cost benefits, preserves resale value



Our own Christopher Sweetnam-Holmes featured at the launch (pictured front right)

TORONTO & MONTREAL, March 3 /CNW Telbec/ - As part of its introduction of the new LEED(TM) Canada for Homes rating system, the Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), together with the builders and providers behind the projects, hosted tours of two new homes that are candidates for LEED certification. The homes are among the first in the country to achieve this new recognition. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is viewed across North America as one of the most rigorous third-party certifications for green buildings.

Among other features, LEED-certified homes use energy and water more efficiently, are built with sustainable and more durable materials, provide increased comfort, and improved health for occupants. For a new home to gain LEED certification, it must achieve performance measures in eight categories: Innovation & Design Process (ID); Location & Linkages (LL); Sustainable Sites (SS); Water Efficiency (WE); Energy & Atmosphere (EA); Materials & Resources (MR); Indoor Environmental Quality (EQ); and Awareness and Education (AE).

"We're delighted to be standing alongside these builders to launch the LEED Canada for Homes rating system. Leading builders know that homebuyers today are increasingly looking for high performance and long-term value first, and LEED-certified homes meet that demand," said Thomas Mueller, president and CEO of the CaGBC. "The owners of new LEED-certified homes will enjoy the many comfort and health benefits of these homes, but they'll also save money, with a home that's up to 70 percent more energy efficient. Plus the resale value will remain high as more home buyers look for the durability and high performance that a LEED home provides - a real edge in an uncertain real estate market."

In fact, a recent Nielsen survey confirmed the willingness of potential homeowners to pay more for a green certified home. Of the more than 5,000 Canadian households surveyed, 85 percent of the respondents said that certification would play an important role in their home purchase decisions (for future purchases or if it was available for past purchases), and 82 percent said they would be willing to invest more money in a home purchase if it was certified.

The homebuilders showcasing their LEED candidate homes in Toronto and Montreal today were also integral in refining the LEED rating system for the Canadian home market. They were participants in the LEED Canada for Homes case study, which adapted the U.S. rating system for

the Canadian market, tailoring it to account for this country's building practices and diverse geography, regionalities, and weather realities.

In Toronto, BILD, the Building Industry and Land Development Association gave a tour of its Archetype Sustainable House at the Kortright Centre's Living City Campus. LEED Canada for Homes Provider Emmanuel Cosgrove of Ecohabitation was a co-host in Montreal, guiding event attendees through the **Abondance Montreal Triplex** on Boulevard LaSalle.

LEED Canada for Homes applies to new single-family homes or low-rise multi-family projects of no more than three storeys. Although about 200 Canadian projects are registered with the U.S. version of the tool, the CaGBC expects hundreds more homes will be registered under the new Canadian rating system within the first month of its release. When certified, these homes join the seven others in Canada that have achieved LEED-certification under the U.S. version of the tool, which was introduced in 2008.

The LEED Canada for Homes certification is being delivered to the market through seven Providers. Located across the country and selected by the CaGBC, these Providers are experts in high performance, sustainable building, and provide green home rating support services to builders. Providers are also responsible for choosing suitable LEED Canada for Homes projects and administering a team of professional raters, who, together with the providers, verify that homes in the program meet the rating system criteria.

To ensure the homebuilder market understands the opportunities afforded by the LEED Canada for Homes program and LEED certification, the CaGBC will host education and information sessions across the country throughout March and April. The sessions will include representatives from the CaGBC, local green homebuilders and LEED Canada for Homes Providers. For more information about the certification program and these sessions, visit cagbc.org and click on the LEED Canada for Homes link.

About the CaGBC

The Canada Green Building Council is the leading national industry organization advancing green building practices for livable communities. It represents more than 2,000 member organizations involved in the design, construction, and operation of buildings. For more information, visit www.cagbc.org.

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