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Winners of Seventh Annual Connecticut Zero Energy Challenge Announced

Winning builders and homeowners in Derby, Ellington, Guilford, Sharon and Stonington demonstrate that super high efficiency homes are achievable

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. – April 25, 2017 – Energize Connecticut, in partnership with Eversource and AVANGRID, Inc. subsidiaries United Illuminating, Southern Connecticut Gas and Connecticut Natural Gas, have selected five winners for the seventh annual Energize Connecticut [Zero Energy Challenge](#) (ZEC), a statewide design and build competition for single and multi-family homes. This year's competition featured 17 homes from across the state built between June 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017.

In this nationally recognized initiative, participants are challenged to construct high efficiency homes that consume little to no energy by using sustainable building practices.

“With new renewable energy technologies and energy-efficient building requirements, new residential construction continues to evolve, and the Zero Energy Challenge exemplifies this shift in the industry,” said Taren O’Connor, the Energy Efficiency Board Chair. “Participants in the Challenge are dedicated to the net zero energy movement and are building environmentally-friendly, resilient, comfortable homes. I applaud this year’s participants and winners for their hard work and devotion to transforming the residential new construction market in Connecticut.”

[RESNET Rating Standards](#) are used to determine each home's [HERS Index](#) (Home Energy Rating Score), a nationally standardized scoring system that measures a home’s energy performance (the lower the number, the more energy efficient the home; a score of zero represents a net zero energy home). A low HERS index, the home’s cost effectiveness and total estimated operating costs are used to determine the winners in each category.

The 2016 Zero Energy Challenge winners include:

Overall Winner

Project: Deb and Russell Heinrich Residence, Guilford, Conn.

Builder: Bill Freeman and Alicia Dolce – Celebration Green Design & Build, Madison, Conn.

“After spending time at an environmentally conscious community in Costa Rica, we decided to create a self-sustaining lifestyle for ourselves. Because of this interest, we attended an open

house for a completed Zero Energy Passive Home built by Celebration Green Design & Build to learn how the principles of a passive home would enable us to achieve our dream,” said Russell Heinrich, homeowner. “Once we had conceptual plans, we began transforming our design for a high performance home into the reality of a zero energy home that would leave as small a carbon footprint as possible.”

Best Overall Envelope (tied)

Project: Silver Lake Conference Center, Sharon, Conn.

Builder: Greg Ariflian – Silver Lake Conference Center, Sharon, Conn.

Project: Deb and Russell Heinrich Residence, Guilford, Conn.

Builder: Bill Freeman and Alicia Dolce – Celebration Green Design & Build, Madison, Conn.

Lowest HERS Index Without Renewables Winner

Project: Sandy and Jeff Alexander Residence, Stonington, Conn.

Builder: Nick Lehto – Lehto Design/Build, Killingly, Conn.

Lowest Overall HERS Index Winner

Project: Janis and Steve Moser Residence, Ellington, Conn.

Builder: Steve Moser, Ellington, Conn.

Lowest Cost/Square Foot

Project: Derby Residence, Derby, Conn.

Builder: Mark Nuzzolo and D.J. Collins – Brookside Development, Woodbridge, Conn.

Specific project information for all entries can be found by visiting

CTZeroEnergyChallenge.com.

The Connecticut Zero Energy Challenge is now seeking participants for its 2017 challenge. The deadline to apply is June 1, 2017. Homes must be completed by January 31, 2018. If interested in applying, please visit CTZeroEnergyChallenge.com for more details.

About Energize Connecticut

Energize Connecticut helps you save money and use clean energy. It is an initiative of the State of Connecticut, the Connecticut Green Bank, Eversource, UI, SCG and CNG, with funding from a charge on customer energy bills. Information on energy-saving programs can be found at EnergizeCT.com or by calling 877.WISE.USE.

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*****Additional pictures available upon request.*****