

GREEN HOUSE

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CURB APPEAL: Builder Andy Toms simply adapted and upgraded the specs on an existing plan to achieve a gold rating without having to alter the home's aesthetic appeal.

Green Touch

Whirlpool Corp.'s new Green Touch

Program combines a wealth of products, design tools, and marketing assistance to help builders achieve higher levels of sustainability. The appliance giant boasts more than 600 Energy Star-qualified and other appliances (including HVAC equipment) that save water, energy, or both while promoting healthy indoor air. The new program also offers several Internet-based tools that streamline the design, project visualization, and product selection processes, including a digital gallery of homes and 3-D virtual tours of exemplary



homes. Builders also can use a trio of awards programs sponsored by Whirlpool that recognize green building efforts and assist in the promotion of green-built homes. Visit insideadvantage.com/sustainable or call 800-253-3977 for more information. ▶

GREEN CERTIFICATION

Learning Experience

A model home built to the highest standard of the NAHB's green building program offers lessons about the certification process.

WHEN THE NAHB RELEASED ITS GREEN building program in early 2007, Andy Toms was curious. Like many builders, he wanted to know how his homes, unchanged, measured up to the program's standards and rating system. "We found we were building to a bronze level, almost a silver, without making any adjustments," he says. Toms, the director of production for EGStoltzfus Homes in Lancaster, Pa., a diversified firm with about 169 starts a year, says he compared specifications and used the program's

online scoring tool. "We knew we had a good product, but we'd never pushed the energy or green angle [in our marketing efforts]."

Given his findings, Toms became interested in the process to get his company's homes certified and what marketing benefits might result—especially in a slumping housing climate and an area with little experience in green building practices. "Nobody here, including subs and suppliers, had any working knowledge of green building," he says. "We were blazing the trail." (see page 40)