

# ***GREEN BUILDING***

## **GREEN BUILDING IS NOW A NATIONAL STANDARD**

**RON DESIMONE, BUILDER**

Everywhere we turn we hear about Green Building, but just what constitutes a “Green Building?”

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) recently put that question to rest when they partnered with the International Code Council (ICC) to create a National Green Building Standard which was approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) on January 29, 2009.

Under the new standard, buildings receive certification through a three step process of design evaluation scoring, two or more onsite inspections by an approved verifier, and final certification approval by the NAHB Research Center. The NAHB Green certification has four levels; Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Emerald, which are determined by a point system via an extensive checklist. The checklist covers the entire design and building process in six chapters:



- Lot Design, Preparation and Development
- Resource Efficiency
- Energy Efficiency
- Water Efficiency
- Indoor Environmental Quality
- Operation, Maintenance, and Building Owner Education

The NAHB Green program is open to everyone, however anyone reading through the complex 120 page standard, or the 40+ page checklist will quickly see that the process is not for amateurs. Builders must have a thorough understanding of the principles of building science regarding every aspect of building design and construction. To better prepare builders for this complex process the NAHB created the Certified Green Professional (CGP) builder certification program. The CGP program includes a two day course in building science, and one day of business management for building professionals. Certification holders must then complete 8 hours of continuing education per year.

Green Building is a new level of consciousness of how we design, build, and maintain our homes. The concept goes beyond energy efficiency, to look at the environmental impact, conservation of resources, the quality, longevity, and environmental impact of the materials we use, and the quality of the indoor environment we create. Green Building is a new generational building code that reflects an enhanced level of responsibility for our impact on planet earth. We have passed the cusp of this movement, and “Green” will now penetrate every aspect of our lives until it is no longer a thought in our mind, but simply a reality of life.