

## Press Release

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For Immediate Release

### **Platinum Green Standard Shows Where Homebuilding is Headed**

**ORLANDO, Fla.** – In 1957, Disneyland introduced the “House of the Future,” built from fiberglass in the shape of four cantilevered wings. In 2017, another Orlando home showcased a more likely future.

Located on Lake Mabel Drive, the home is built with LED lighting, no-VOC paint, recycled drywall, solar panels and cutting-edge energy efficiency.

It received a rating of Platinum—the highest rank awarded by the Florida Green Builders Coalition (FGBC), Florida’s leading certifier of green homes. Platinum is a green rating not too many Florida homes achieve today.

But, it’s a future that’s not far off, said Jason Vermilya, who built the home. In California, there’s already a goal to build all homes to a net-zero energy efficiency standard by 2020.

“I think soon we’re going to all have to adapt to that platform. If you’re going to be in this business, you’re going to have to learn how to do this,” said Vermilya, who is president of Synergy Custom Builders.

The Florida Green Building Coalition is here to guide them. FGBC awards four levels of green certification, ranging from Bronze to Platinum.

The standards are flexible. Builders collect points across multiple categories, such as energy efficiency, water conservation, health, site selection, land preservation, durable and/or recycled materials, and disaster mitigation.

The final score determines what level of certification a home receives. Ralph Locke, president of Environmental Construction and Consulting Inc., was the green consultant and the certifier of the project.

Most green homes built in Florida today receive the Silver award. Going to Platinum means builders must think differently from the way they learned home building many years ago.

“It’s not as much about cost as it is about taking extra steps,” said Bill Kachman, an FGBC board member. “You have to research new materials and products. But the result is a much nicer house, and it’s a more sellable product.”

To reach Platinum, a home builder must mind details. The home may be energy efficient, but has every nook and cranny been sealed to make sure termites, ants and moisture can’t penetrate?



Does the house have a hurricane-resistant roof, such as one made of steel? Are windows impact resistant, or if not, do they have shutters?

Two categories where homes don't collect points very often are for site selection and land preservation, Kachman said.

Homes closer to shopping, businesses and schools, for example, can score higher, because owners will drive shorter distances. Trees on the lot could be saved, rather than cleared.

Homeowners are often the ones who drive builders towards the higher green standard. For example, Synergy Custom Builders has carved out a niche in the green home industry.

But the Lake Mabel Drive home is the first one the company has built that went Platinum.

The owners are from Europe, where green standards are high, and they were looking for something similar in their new home. The 6,000-square-foot home Synergy built produces nearly as much energy from solar panels as it consumes.

The electric bill in July was \$71.

Vermilya already puts many green features, like extra insulation, recycled materials and LED lighting, into every house he builds, so most of his homes qualify for Bronze certification by default. It's just what he believes in.

But taking it to Platinum? "It's all about having a willing client who wanted to do it with me," he said.

**For more information on "Florida Green" contact the Florida Green Building Coalition, e-mail [info@floridagreenbuilding.org](mailto:info@floridagreenbuilding.org) or visit [www.floridagreenbuilding.org](http://www.floridagreenbuilding.org).**