

Built Green homes go for the gold

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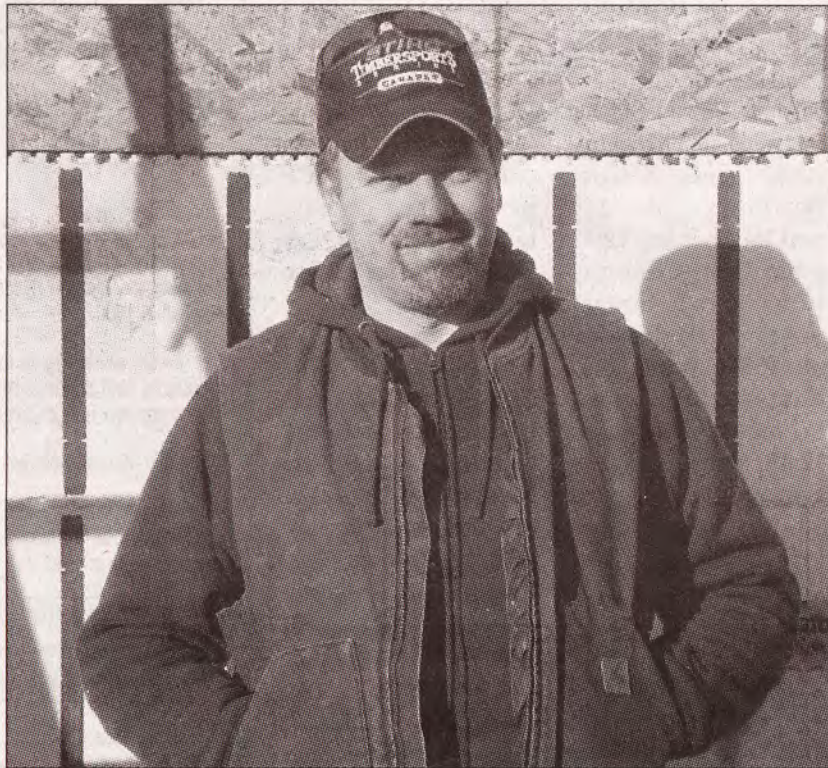
The first builder in the Cariboo to register in the Built Green program has begun construction of a green home in 100 Mile House.

An environmentally-sound house project is underway in a new subdivision on Cariboo Trail, thanks to Kellermeier Contracting Ltd. of 108 Mile Ranch.

The Built Green program was developed by the Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA) and registered members are currently located in either British Columbia or Alberta. The program includes mandatory builder training and third-party testing, inspections and audits.

The only Built Green member in the Cariboo is Kellermeier Contracting.

As "green" may mean many things to many people, Kellermeier Contracting president Thomas Kellermeier



Carole Rooney photo

Thomas Kellermeier stands in front of a green-home project he is constructing in a new subdivision on Cariboo Trail in 100 Mile House. The 108 Mile resident says he is the first contractor to register in the Built Green program in the Cariboo.

summarizes the impact of building within the program boundaries.

"By green, it means building a home that is more energy efficient, uses sustainable materials and creates a better indoor environment for the people who live in them."

Living healthier in your new home and lowering your carbon footprint doesn't mean you have to spend a lot more, Kellermeier says, adding that building a green home with reasonable quality components could result in as little as a five per cent increase

to the overall construction cost.

The Built Green checklist categorizes builders in one of four levels, from bronze to platinum, and includes a points system for various criteria from recycled content to innovation to resource use.

The home is audit-

ed from the planning stages by an independent energy advisor who checks all specifications, plus components such as the heating system, before completing his analysis with a blower door test to measure how airtight the final product is.

The advisor then assigns an EnerGuide rating and label, Kellermeier says, adding it identifies the home within the applicable level and submits it to Built Green, which then issue a certificate to the builder.

As this Built Green project is the first of its kind, Kellermeier says it is intended as a testing and learning project, after which the home will be placed on the market and sold. While it may not achieve gold, Kellermeier says he will be very happy if it gets silver.

Once finished, this partially completed new home will include ARXX foam-block foundation; lumber framing from

sustainable-managed forests; lintels, headers and beams made of engineered material; interior wall framing of finger-jointed studs from recycled wood waste; asphalt roofing of 40 per cent recycled content; EnergyStar low-e windows; and fibre-cement siding.

Many other green elements are incorporated in the interior, including specially selected heating, lighting, cabinetry, water usage, appliances, flooring, gyproc, insulation and paint - all chosen for their low environmental imprint.

Some materials were also made locally, such as the windows.

Since emigrating from Germany to the Cariboo in 1998, Kellermeier has

worked in the building field and has been a licensed builder for the past five years.

To start the green building process, Kellermeier joined the CHBA and then successfully completed a two-day course on the topic at British Columbia Institute of Technology, including a final exam.

"My goal is, in a couple years from now, to be able to offer my clients green homes and build all my homes to the Built Green program."

While the Built Green program for builders is voluntary, Kellermeier says he thinks it is important and the right thing to do. The 108 Mile resident adds he believes some day soon it will be mandated in the building code.