

Net Zero Energy Homes ----- Saving and

We are experiencing rapid change in the built environment. We are overcoming challenges in efficiency and design. We are saving energy and water while maintaining the standards of comfort we have become accustomed to.

Across the country (and the world) buildings are being constructed now that meet the criteria for net zero homes. Here is a link to a map of 77 certified Net Zero homes in the U.S.

<http://energy.gov/eere/buildings/doe-tour-zero>

In 2010, an estimated 25,000 homes and buildings had been certified to meet 'Passive House' standards in Europe. 'Passive House' is the standard from Germany for extremely low or zero energy use buildings. Minergie-P is the standard used in Switzerland. Currently about 13% of new construction in Switzerland meets this criteria.

Of course all these changes come complete with a 'learning curve' for the designers, the builders and the building inspectors.

Here is some information to help explain the future we are aiming for:

Per United States Department of Energy:

'A DOE Zero Energy Ready Home is a high performance home which is so energy efficient, that a renewable energy system can offset all or most of its annual energy consumption.'

<http://energy.gov/eere/buildings/zero-energy-ready-home>

The goal of all new construction of buildings meeting Net Zero guidelines by 2030 is being pursued by several organizations and at many levels of government. The 2030 Challenge and AIA 2030 lay out the details of the goal:

http://architecture2030.org/2030_challenges/2030-challenge/

Either new construction or retrofits of existing building can be designed to meet Net Zero standards. If Net Zero is to be the standard by 2030...why build something now that will so quickly fall below standard when the technology exists to build for tomorrow's world? After all, the house you build today could still be in use more than 100 years from now.