



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Canada's New Government Congratulates Winners of EQUilibrium Competition to Develop Energy-Efficient Homes**

**OTTAWA, Ontario, February 13, 2007** — Twelve Canadian homebuilder teams have been selected as winners of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) EQUilibrium sustainable housing competition.

The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, and Minister responsible for CMHC, and Jacques Gourde, Parliamentary Secretary to the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of Natural Resources, made the announcement today at CMHC's National Office.

"Canada's New Government congratulates the 12 winners of this national competition, who have designed eco-friendly and energy-efficient housing models," said Minister Solberg. "These houses are designed to produce as much energy as they consume on an annual basis. They will be a blueprint for the next generation of housing in Canada."

"EQUilibrium housing is a perfect complement to our ecoENERGY initiative," said Mr. Gourde. "The ecoENERGY Efficiency Initiative recognizes that the biggest source of untapped energy is the energy we waste. Under the ecoEnergy Retrofit Houses initiative, more than 90 cents of every dollar will go directly to Canadians who retrofit their homes and buildings to make them more energy efficient."

The goal of CMHC's EQUilibrium initiative is to demonstrate a new approach to housing in Canada. It will support the building of sustainable, healthy houses that are also affordable and energy- and resource-efficient. EQUilibrium housing is designed to lower homeowners' energy bills by reducing energy consumption and delivering electricity back to the grid. The homes will also promote water conservation, healthy indoor environments, durability, and reduced pollutant emissions.

Each winning team will receive \$50,000 from CMHC to offset eligible costs, including those relating to documenting the projects, performance testing, and demonstrating the homes publicly. In addition, CMHC will work with the winning teams to provide technical and promotional support, and will monitor and report on the performance of the houses.

The winning projects were chosen by independent housing experts from a total of 72 homebuilder teams that submitted applications in July 2006 through a two-stage competitive process. The demonstration homes will be open to Canadians to view by 2008, after which CMHC will explore opportunities to advance EQUilibrium housing principles more broadly across the housing industry.

As architect of the EQUilibrium initiative, CMHC worked in close consultation with federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, industry stakeholders, as well as utilities. EQUilibrium brings together the principles of occupant health and comfort, energy efficiency, renewable energy production, resource and water conservation, and reduced environmental impact.

CMHC's new EQUilibrium brand replaces the previous working name for this initiative, Net Zero Energy Healthy Housing. The name EQUilibrium was chosen to reflect the goal of balancing our housing needs with those of the environment.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has been Canada's national housing agency for more than 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, while making vibrant, healthy communities and cities a reality across the country.

### **For Broadcast Use**

Human Resources and Social Development Minister Monte Solberg has announced the winners of a national sustainable housing competition known as EQUilibrium.

The 12 winning teams were awarded \$50,000 each from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The money will help them build energy-efficient healthy demonstration homes across the country.

Mr. Solberg said that EQUilibrium homes are designed to produce as much energy as they use on an annual basis.

He said EQUilibrium will reduce the environmental impact of homes and set the stage for the next generation of housing in Canada.

The demonstration homes will be open to Canadians to view by next year.

For more information about CMHC's EQUilibrium housing initiative, contact:

#### Backgrounder — EQUilibrium Healthy Housing Initiative

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