



PRESS RELEASE



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Alstonvale Net Zero House Breaks Ground in Quebec — an EQUilibrium Demonstration House

HUDSON, Quebec, August 29, 2007 — The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced the groundbreaking of an EQUilibrium demonstration home today.

Sevag Pogharian Design (SPD), a Montreal-based design-build firm, began construction of the Alstonvale Net Zero House in Hudson, Québec, as part of CMHC's EQUilibrium sustainable housing initiative.

"Canada's New Government is proud to partner with the private sector to develop energy-efficient homes and congratulates the Sevag Pogharian Design project team on the start of their construction," said Minister Solberg. "Projects such as the EQUilibrium demonstration house support the objectives of our government to help Canadians conserve energy and other resources, and ultimately reduce pollutant emissions. These houses will be healthy to live in, will be designed to produce as much energy as they consume on an annual basis, and will be a blueprint for the next generation of sustainable housing in Canada."

The design of the Alstonvale Net Zero House incorporates many technologies and innovations to reduce green house gas (GHG) emissions and achieve a net-zero energy target. Net-zero energy consumption means that the house will, over a twelve-month period, generate as much energy as it consumes. "Getting to net zero requires a well-thought-out and optimized home," said architect-builder Sevag Pogharian. "To get to this point, a building must have a high-performance envelope, it must exploit passive heating and cooling, and it must make very effective use of renewable energy systems."

This Alstonvale Net Zero House project includes a building-integrated, photovoltaic/thermal system, which goes beyond the current state of the art in solar technologies by combining electric and thermal energy generation within a single system. In addition to providing energy to the home, the system will power an electric car. This demonstrates the attainability of not just a net-zero energy house but a net-zero energy lifestyle whereby the house generates all the energy required for both the domestic needs as well as the local transportation needs of its household.

CMHC's EQUilibrium housing initiative demonstrates a new approach to housing in Canada. It brings together the principles of occupant health and comfort, energy efficiency, renewable energy production, resource and water conservation, and reduced environmental impact under one roof.

The 12 project teams that won CMHC's national EQUilibrium competition earlier this year are now turning their design concepts into real homes. Each EQUilibrium team will receive \$60,000 from CMHC to offset eligible costs, including those related to documenting the projects, testing, and demonstrating the homes publicly.

In addition, CMHC will work with the winning teams to provide technical and promotional support, including market research. CMHC will also support performance monitoring of the EQUilibrium homes under actual living conditions.

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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 Canada's national housing agency, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) draws on over 60 years of experience to help Canadians access a variety of quality, environmentally sustainable, and affordable homes — homes that will continue to create vibrant and healthy communities and cities across the country.

For more information call 1-800-668-2642.

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