

# The **Sunday** Macomb Daily Homefront

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## Going green

### Environmental organization sets standards for owners and builders

By Stephen Bitsoli  
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

If you'd like a more energy efficient and environmentally friendly home, you might want a home built to the standards of Green Built Michigan.

The organization was founded to "promote Green Built practices and better building products" for new homes, according to its president, Arn McIntyre. They have a green remodeling standard, too, and Green Built Michigan also set up a certification process by independent, third-party inspectors.

McIntyre is also owner of McIntyre Builders near Grand Rapids. "We've been energy efficient builders since the '80s," McIntyre said.

There are three main reasons why a Green Built home is desirable, McIntyre said:



Green Built Homes, such as this one, look like any other home, not a science experiment.

- Because of energy and other savings, "The total cost of ownership — initial cost plus operating cost — is often less expensive," McIntyre said.

- Enhanced indoor air quality, McIntyre said, is sometimes more important than energy savings, especially for people with allergies or asthma.

- "Homes have a greater impact on the environment than automobiles," McIntyre said. "In general most consumers feel some degree of environmental stewardship and will do their part when they can."

There are at least seven standards to meet for Green Built status, usually starting with energy efficient products such as better insulation, fewer wall

studs, Energy Star appliances, on-demand water heaters and perhaps photovoltaics for solar energy and a windmill for wind power.

Other standards include whether you use renewable green materials, how you manage water resources, the design of the lot, how well the homeowner is educated to use and maintain the green features and "global impact" (your "carbon footprint" among other things).

The cost to meet the energy efficiency standards alone is between \$2,000 and \$5,000, McIntyre estimates. To meet

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