

Gerald and Marilyn Disher- Energy Efficiency Champions- Residential sector

Gerald and Marilyn Disher of St Stephen are the proud owners of an EnerGuide 90 rated home which is, quite simply, one of the most energy efficient homes in the province.

Achieving this very high energy efficiency rating required extreme attention to detail. The house incorporates very high levels of insulation, and thorough air sealing of the home's building envelope both at the Maple Leaf Homes manufacturing plant in Fredericton as well as when the home was installed and finished on the building site.



"We just built energy efficiency right into the plans," says Gerald, "and as a result we have a very tightly built, highly energy efficient home." The Dishers' home includes: R-30 insulation in the exterior walls, R-50 attic insulation and R-20 rigid foam below the basement concrete floor. Passive solar heating is maximized through the use of south-facing triple glazed windows which include low E coating and argon gas. The house is also heated by a geothermal heating system and ventilated by a heat recovery ventilation (HRV) unit.

The additional cost of insulation, air tightness and energy efficient windows only adds up to 5% to the cost of a home and the yearly energy savings easily pay for this.

Gerald, aside from being the owner of a very efficient home, is also an advocate for energy efficient construction as part owner of Disher Homes Ltd., a housing sales centre and retailer for Maple Leaf Homes Inc., one of the province's largest builders of manufactured homes. Gerald says that because of his business, he was curious to see just how energy efficient a manufactured home could get.

In part, his motivation was to test the waters from a business perspective: "I wanted to do it more as a challenge for the business," he says. And to great success, with an EnerGuide rating of 90, their home is among the most energy efficient in the province.

Built in the factory, "from inside out" their home was built on schedule and is tightly sealed. With a geothermal heat pump, Gerald says that their home is very comfortably heated and he and his wife are also extremely happy with their low monthly energy costs.

Gerald says building the home to such a high rating was not difficult. "I can't think of anything that presented a major challenge. At the factory they are well versed in the details of energy efficient construction," says Gerald.



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Gerald says that he is looking to both create and broaden the market for energy efficient manufactured homes. He hopes that his home will serve as a model to others considering building or buying a new home as its serves as a great example of just how far they can get when buying with energy efficiency in mind. "We serve a lot of markets, with clients looking for affordability, especially retirement homes and homes for young families. We hope to see that energy efficiency is more at the forefront of those markets now."



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