

SUSTAINING Steamboat

BY DAGNY MCKINLEY

Green Home Tours take curious sustainability-seekers through homes in Steamboat which showcase environmentally friendly building and remodeling techniques. Twice a year, in the spring and fall, people gather in the parking lot of Steamboat High School to board vans that shuttle them to four houses in three hours. During that time guests are invited to view houses that incorporate solar hot water heating, salvaged materials, radiant floor heating, straw bale construction and more. The purpose of the tour is to “get the conversation out there,” said Mara Bennett, with Home ReSource, a green building non-profit recycling center in Milner, and one of the organizers of the fall tour. The more educated people are, the more they can appreciate inventive ways to preserve our land and resources.

The tour was originally organized by the Chamber of Commerce as well as community volunteers as a part of the Sustainability Summit. While most people have heard of new building practices referred to as green or sustainable, what does that really mean? The code GHT follows was defined by the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

This past fall, more than seventy-five people showed up to find out what sustainable looks like in their neighbors’ homes. At the end of the tour, attendees fill out a questionnaire. Bennett likes the people who are the most critical. “Those are the people who are thinking,” she says.

Each excursion strives to find houses that are working harder to be sustainable. Future tours will include earth-ships and Energy Star rated homes. With the number of green homes in Routt County on the rise, there are more and more examples of how easy it is to achieve some degree of “green” in building and remodeling.

The less waste we create, the better we’re doing as a community. Look for the next Green Home Tour in 2008. To have your home considered for a future tour, or to obtain information on the current inventory of green homes, please contact Sarah Fox, a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Accredited Professional with Fox Construction, sarah@fox-construction.com or Angela Ashby, Ecobroker® for Prudential Steamboat Realty, angela@yoursteamboathome.com.

On the following two pages get a glimpse at how unique our community’s green homes are and some of the green features they’ve integrated. Coming in the summer 2008 edition of *HomeLink* we’ll take a tour inside local homes to get a closer look at how our neighbors are doing their part to live more sustainably.



7th Street



- Solar Evacuated Tubes, providing 75% of all their hot water
- House split into zones for energy efficient heating and cooling
- Concrete Mass wall, which helps keep consistent temperature
- Low-flow shower heads
- Rubber flooring made from recycled tires
- Preserved original footprint of home
- Xeriscaping in front yard

Manitou Road

- Passive Solar Design including trombe wall, CMU block and concrete walls
- South facing windows without Low E coating to allow heat into house
- Built with SIPS panels (Structural Insulated Panels)
- Salvaged toilets, cabinets, bathtubs, appliances and more
- Evacuated Tube Solar Collectors for use in heating domestic water
- Energy Recovery Ventilator with heat exchange and ventilation system





River Road

- Straw bales
- Passive solar design
- Beetle kill pine used for tongue and groove ceiling
- Salvaged and sustainable materials including maple flooring and reclaimed barn wood
- R-46 insulation value
- Radiant in-floor heat

Dougherty Road

- Exterior walls and garage constructed with SIPS panels
- Frost protected shallow foundation; 2 ft stem walls with a 5" concrete slab
- Radiant heat
- Low VOC paints throughout
- Bamboo flooring
- Community building that provides sleep accommodations for visitors

