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For Immediate Release

New Home Builders Vie for Green Title in the Connecticut Zero Energy Challenge

JULY 8, 2010, NEW BRITAIN, CONN – The Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund is sponsoring the 2010-2011 Zero Energy Challenge competition for designers and builders of new homes in Connecticut. While the 2009-2010 Challenge is still going strong, the 2010-2011 Challenge will allow another group of high-achieving builders and homeowners to showcase their groundbreaking projects.

“The response to the current Challenge has been very exciting,” said Energy Efficiency Fund Chairman, Rich Steeves. “Several of the homes are complete or nearly so and a number of them are operating at near or below zero energy. We are confident that the next group of participating new homes will also rise to the challenge and be a model for home builders across the state.”

Applications are due by July 31, 2010. Participants will then be announced and their building progress will be documented on the Zero Energy Challenge web site and through media announcements until their completion, no later than December 1, 2011.

The new residential building projects selected to participate will be competing to achieve the lowest possible energy use. Each participating home will be ranked in order based on how it performs in four categories. The overall winner of the Challenge will possess the lowest aggregate score, and will receive \$10,000. In deciding the overall winners, and in the case of a tie, additional consideration will be given to those homes that also utilize non-energy-related green building features, including those related to water efficiency, materials use, advanced framing, and waste and site management.

Individual category winners will also be recognized and awarded \$5,000 cash prizes. These categories are as follows: 1.) Lowest overall HERS* Index; 2.) Lowest HERS* Index without renewable technologies; 3.) Most affordable project (cost/square foot); and 4.) Lowest projected annual operating cost.

* Home Energy Rating System or HERS is a scoring system used by third-party professionals to compare the projected energy use of a given home to a similar home built to code standards.

Participating utilities are The Connecticut Light and Power Company, The United Illuminating Company, Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation, Southern Connecticut Gas Company and Yankee Gas Services Company. The homes being entered in the Zero Energy Challenge must be built in the service territory of one of the participating utilities and must be a customer of that utility. Eligible homes include any home or unit about to be, or in the process of development in Connecticut that can be categorized under the residential designation by the Connecticut state

building code. This may include homes that are single family attached and detached, multi-family, condos and townhouses. Multi-family attached homes must be three stories or less to be considered “residential.” Complete details on eligibility, the rating system, how to enter and required documentation can be found on the Connecticut Zero Energy Challenge web site, www.CTZeroEnergyChallenge.com.

The purpose of the Challenge is to showcase and promote builders and developers of highly energy-efficient homes (near zero energy). These innovative homes will demonstrate that building to this level of super efficiency is achievable today. It is expected that homes in the Challenge will greatly exceed minimum code standards and will incorporate advanced design and construction techniques such as superior insulation, high efficiency heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) systems including inverter driven or geothermal heat pump technology, solar thermal water and photovoltaic systems, and advanced construction.

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About the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund

The Energy Efficiency Fund promotes efficient energy use, helps residents and businesses save on their electric and natural gas bills, advances economic development, reduces electric demand and helps reduce air pollution. Energy Efficiency Fund conservation programs serve residential customers, including limited- and fixed-income customers, as well as business and municipal customers. Connecticut’s energy efficiency programs are funded by a charge on customers’ utility bills and administered by the state’s electric and gas utilities including: The Connecticut Light and Power Company, The United Illuminating Company, Yankee Gas Services Company, Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation and Southern Connecticut Gas Company. Additional information on Connecticut’s energy efficiency programs can be found at www.ctenergyinfo.com.