



Media Contact:

CL&P Contact: Ellen Rosenthal, 860-665-5577

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connecticut Zero Energy Challenge Winners Announced

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (Jan xx, 2012) – The [Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund](http://www.CTEnergyInfo.com), in partnership with Connecticut Light & Power and The United Illuminating Company, is pleased to announce the winners of the 2010-2011 Connecticut [Zero Energy Challenge](#) (ZEC). This design and build competition challenges home builders and homeowners to reduce energy consumption and overall environmental impact when building or renovating their home. The winners of this year's ZEC demonstrate the diverse methods and strategies available to meet that challenge.

“The Energy Efficiency Fund is proud to partner with the innovative builders, designers and homeowners of the Zero Energy Challenge,” stated Rich Steeves, Energy Efficiency Board, First Vice Chairperson.

“The winners demonstrated that building to a level of near zero net energy is not only achievable but can also be affordable. These homes exceed minimum building code standards and incorporate advanced design and construction techniques to meet ENERGY STAR® standards and beyond.”

Grand Prize Winner (Lowest Combined Score): Voluntown residents John and Delaine Simonds signed up for the ZEC with the objective to build a green home constructed with quality materials all while keeping an eye on affordability. Although they did not top any one category, their strong performance in energy efficiency, renewables and practicality won them the top prize. Features include a passive solar design, allowing the structure to collect solar energy in the winter for heat gain and reject it in the summer to keep the home cool; a geothermal forced air heating and cooling system that takes advantage of the earth's constant temperature to heat and cool the home; a leased photovoltaic (PV) system that utilizes the sun's rays to create electricity; and energy efficient appliances, lighting, and framing.

Most Affordable Energy Efficient Project (cost/sq. ft.): Coventry homeowners Sam and Teri Norman built their highly efficient home at a cost per square foot of just \$101. Their labor of love resulted in an extremely affordable, energy efficient and environmentally friendly home. The home is a passive solar

home with custom windows that allow heat into the home and minimize heat loss in the winter as well as a floor that collects heat from the sun throughout the day and releases the heat into the home when the ambient temperature drops. Other features include a geothermal heating and cooling system; efficient insulation, lighting, and appliances; and a PV system.

Lowest Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index without Renewable Technologies: Ashford homeowners Cindy Moeckel and Larry Grasso put their “commitment to stopping global warming” to work in their 1,728 sq. ft. single family home. The home features a forced air geothermal heating and cooling system, a variety of energy efficient insulating and sealing techniques, and an overhang to keep direct sunlight out of the home at noon during warmer months. Not including the leased PV system, the Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index is 46. 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. A home with a HERS index of 100 is said to be at code. Conversely, a home with a HERS index of zero indicates the home uses no outside energy.

Lowest Overall HERS Index AND Lowest Projected Annual Net Operating Costs: Bernard Zahren’s vision for a zero energy home became reality when he renovated and expanded his Avon home, originally built in 1961, to 5,327 square feet. Zahren incorporated a number of unique energy efficiency measures and renewable energy generation to reach a final HERS Index of -9 indicating that the home is generating more power than it consumes – a true zero energy home! The home features a good building envelope; a highly efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning system; a geothermal system; a solar domestic hot water system on the roof to meet hot water needs; and a windmill to generate electricity. These features provide a teaching tool – a focal point of Zahren’s mission as he is actively involved with students at the nearby Talcott Mountain Academy.

An award ceremony honoring these outstanding energy-conscious home owners and builders is planned for March 2012. At that time, cash prizes and awards will be presented.

To learn more about the Zero Energy Challenge and its participants, please visit

www.ctzeroenergychallenge.com.

###

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 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: Connecticut Light and Power, United Illuminating, Yankee Gas, Connecticut Natural Gas, and Southern Connecticut Gas. Additional information on Connecticut’s energy efficiency programs can be found at www.ctenergyinfo.com or by calling 1.877.WISE.USE.