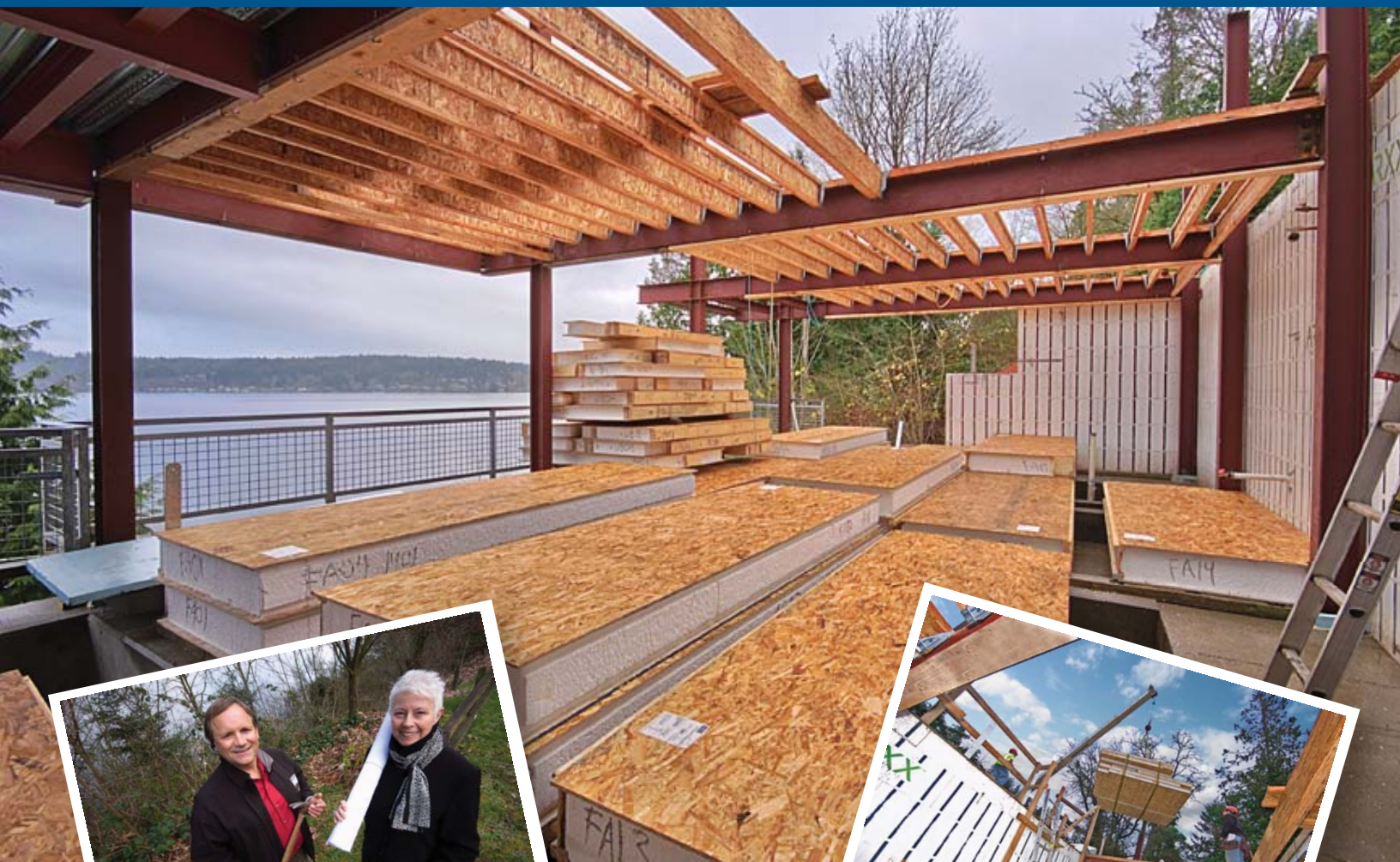


Zero Energy Idea House



On a hill overlooking the blue waters of Washington's Lake Sammamish, builder Donna Shirey of Shirey Contracting set out to build a model home for the future. Just fifteen miles outside of downtown Seattle, Shirey's demonstration home shows how the average homeowner can downsize their carbon footprint by incorporating some simple, energy-efficient technologies.

The Zero Energy Idea House started as Shirey's idea to demonstrate that a smaller home can be practical and generate nearly as much energy as it consumes.

"Our goal is to create a high performance, small, little jewel box of a house for people that want to downsize and have their house create energy," said Shirey.

With heating and cooling accounting for 50 percent of energy use in the average home, Shirey knows that a well insulated building envelope is crucial for an energy-efficient home. She used the Insulspan Structurally Insulated Panel (SIP) system because of its high thermal resistance and proven ability to stop air infiltration, one of the leading causes of heat loss in a home. "We think that to get to zero energy it is a must to build with SIPs," she said. "It is easy to stop any air infiltration, you get great insulating value, and it is just very simple."

Simplicity comes from Insulspan's ready-to-assemble system that makes installation quick and easy. This is especially helpful in difficult site conditions, such as the 40 percent slope beneath the Zero Energy Idea House.

The 1,630 sq. ft. home has photovoltaic solar panels for energy generation, with Energy Star lighting and appliances, and a solar hot water heater to bring the estimated energy costs down

to only \$40 per month. Shirey also took steps to reduce the overall environmental impact of the home by using reclaimed wood and tile with recycled content. A large portion of the roof of the home is covered with vegetation to limit storm water runoff. Shirey also installed a rain water collection system and low flow fixtures to conserve water.

As a sponsor of the Zero Energy Idea House, Insulspan has helped Shirey gain exposure online and extend her message to more consumers. Her husband, Riley Shirey, who manages onsite operations for Shirey Contracting, credited Insulspan for providing exceptional products and service.

"Working with Insulspan has been a fantastic experience," he said. "Their panels are made very well, they were extremely cooperative and it's a pleasure of working with them."