



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Homes for Everyone, Built by Everyone

Habitat for Humanity Orlando provides 58 families with affordable, energy-efficient homes

## LOCAL COLOR

*The first two of a total of 10 buildings have been completed, each of which contains six individual townhomes.*

Habitat for Humanity Orlando is involved in its biggest home-building effort to date: Staghorn Villas, an \$8 million townhome community that will provide affordable housing for 58 local families. Located on a 3.9-acre site at Staghorn Drive and Silver Star Road, Staghorn Villas features 10 buildings with four to eight units each, surrounded by green spaces and play areas. And thanks to the sponsorship of the Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC) and Siemens, it's not only Habitat Orlando's biggest project, it's one of their greenest.

"The townhomes at Staghorn Villas will be some of the most energy-efficient homes that we have ever built," says Dee Danmeyer, executive director of Habitat Orlando. "OUC and Siemens have contributed the funds to not only build a home but allow us to purchase standard green features for every home."

More than 870 compact fluorescent light bulbs are being installed, and all lighting systems throughout the community are being upgraded. Other green features include white roof shingles, Hardie Board siding, double-insulated, low-E windows, low-VOC paint, carpet made from recycled carpet, front loading clothes washers (which save 30-50 percent on water usage), Energy Star refrigerators and washers, R-30 ceiling insulation, R-13 exterior frame walls, R 4.1 interior masonry walls, and SEER 14 air-conditioning systems.

In addition, the use of drought-and-freeze-resistant Argentina

Bahia sod will save water, as only the shrubs and trees will need irrigation. Even the pest resistance will be environmentally friendly; Boracare termite treatment will be used. Finally, each home will receive an Energy Star certification.

"This is the first time we have ventured into Energy Star ratings on our homes," says Danmeyer, "but it is something that we will continue to do whether building single- or multi-family homes.

Habitat for Humanity sponsors not only fund the construction of a home, but help the family build the home. When the house is completed, the sponsors turn the keys over to the family at a dedication ceremony.

Other sponsors for this project include Hannover Life Re, HD Supply, CHEP, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Lowes, Publix, NCAA, GE Solutions, and the Orlando Magic.

Families are chosen for Habitat homeownership based on their need for housing, ability to pay a monthly (interest free) mortgage back to Habitat for their home, and willingness to partner with Habitat (complete 300-500 hours building homes for other families as well as their own, and complete 40 hours of homeownership classes that include such topics as financial literacy, home maintenance, home security and fire safety, and how to be a good neighbor).

Staghorn Villas is slated for completion in the fall of 2011. ❁