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Habitat for Humanity Going Green with Passive House

Posted on 20. Aug, 2012 by [Maryruth Belsey Priebe](#) in [Articles](#)

Habitat for Humanity Passive House - green house plan

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In an effort to turn their affordable, zero-interest houses into buildings that can be operated at a very low cost long term, Habitat for Humanity (HfH) affiliates are beginning to turn to green house plans like those set by the Passive House Institute US. One recent example is the home dedicated by Habitat for Humanity of Madison & Clark Counties in Kentucky this past June for the Hoover family. This is the most energy efficient home the non-profit has built in the region, and the new homeowners couldn't be more excited.

"My husband and I love science and also love that we will be able to save energy and money at the same time," commented Marlana Hoover, the new homeowner, to the [Richmond Register](#). This was the first [passive house](#) deployed for this Habitat affiliate in an effort to learn about the further energy savings that could be achieved by going beyond ENERGY STAR standards.

This family will reap the benefits of the green designs used in their new home by paying energy bills that are 70% less than that paid by residents of conventional home construction. These energy savings are achieved in the 970 square foot home with the following features:

- Fujitsu 9,000 BTU ductless mini split heat pump for heating and cooling
- UltimateAir RecoupAerator to recover heat from ventilated air
- Geospring heat pump water heater
- Double stud wall with high density fiberglass batt insulation
- Super efficient windows
- Flooring of 11 7/8" TJI with R-38 batt and R-10 XPS with taped seams
- Roofing constructed using R-94 loose cellulose insulation in the trusses

Affordable housing is incredibly important given the fact that many families in the US are struggling to make ends meet. The fact that HfH homes are being built to help reduce both purchase and operational costs for these families makes the projects even more financially sustainably over the long term.




This passive house was designed by Ginger Watkins, a Habitat Sustainability Specialist, and should meet the [Passive House Institute US](#) standards. And this isn't the only passive house being built by Habitat for Humanity in the US. Other HfH affiliates have projects in the works, including homes in [Ivy City, Washington](#), [Charlotte, Vermont](#), [Washington, DC](#), and [Belgrade, Montana](#), to name a few locations.

Images via [Passive House USA](#) and [Habitat for Humanity, Madison & Clark Counties](#).



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