



**“Green”**

**Homeowner’s**

**Manual**

# NAHB MODEL GREEN HOME CERTIFICATION

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Your new home has been certified according to the National Association of Homebuilders Green Building Guidelines. Your homebuilder has used these guidelines as a reference in planning and building your home, and has had an independent verifier confirm that the guidelines have been met.

NAHB Model Green Home Guidelines provide builders with information about different aspects of green building. The guidelines are also the basis of our certification program. In order for a home to be certified, the builder must accumulate a minimum number of points in each of the Guidelines' seven sections (Lot Design, Preparation & Development, Resource Efficiency, Energy Efficiency, Water Efficiency, Indoor Air Quality, and Homeowner Education). Points are allocated for meeting different criteria, like using low-flow faucets or putting in solar panels. Because there are an infinite number of ways to build green, we provide builders with a lot of different options, and allow them to choose what makes sense for each project.

Certification to NAHB Model Green Home Guidelines does in no way imply any warranty or guarantee for the home or the home's performance.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMEOWNER MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION**

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A BUILDER CAN DO ONLY SO MUCH WHEN IT COMES TO HOW THE HOME WILL PERFORM. Inadequate maintenance can defeat the designer's and builder's best efforts to create a healthy, resource-efficient home, which is why homeowner education is arguably the most important aspect of Green Building.

Homeowners play a big role in the house performance and, therefore, should take the utmost care to operate their Green Home as it was intended. As an example, homeowners may not change air filters regularly or keep doors and windows closed while the HVAC system is operating, which, in short order, could eliminate much, if not all, of the energy savings and indoor air quality improvements offered by building Green.

Following the old common sense adage, "If you're not using it, turn it off," will go a long way towards making the most of the efficient features of a Green home.

Homeowner maintenance and care for the home's systems will help ensure that a home built to the NAHB Model Green Building Guidelines operates at peak performance throughout its lifetime. Therefore, it is necessary for the builder to walk the homeowner through the basic operations of the home's systems and also provide the homeowner with information and resources on their proper maintenance.

In addition to guidance on system care and maintenance, this handbook will provide you with information on local recycling opportunities, green energy service providers, how the home obtained the various certifications, and the Texas Residential Construction Commission (TRCC).

## **GUTTER CLEANING & MAINTENANCE**

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Gutters provide a very valuable service by protecting siding, windows, doors and foundations from water damage. Gutters/downspouts should divert the water at least 5 feet from the building. To do their job, gutters and downspouts must be clear of leaves and debris. You should plan to clean your gutters twice a year. To clean your gutters:

- 1) Scoop out loose debris: Use a narrow garden trowel to scoop out loose debris, working away from the drain outlet.
- 2) Blast out the gutters with a hose: Use a high pressure nozzle, and work towards the drain outlet. (Note: Many home improvement stores sell hose extensions that allow you to flush the gutters from the ground)
- 3) Clear obstructions in drainpipes: If water doesn't drain freely through drainpipes, flush with water or use a plumber's snake to free and pull out debris from the bottom.
- 4) SAFETY: Always use extreme caution when working on a ladder. Wear gloves to protect your hands from the sharp edges of the gutters.

## HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES

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The Tyler Recycling Collection Center, located at 418 North Bois D'Arc Avenue, is a self-service drop-off center. No payments are made for materials accepted at the center, but recyclables sold by the City helps keep the center open and reduces the amount of waste taken to the Landfill. For more information, call (903) 531-1388, or visit [www.cityoftyler.org](http://www.cityoftyler.org).

Hours of Operation:

Wednesday & Thursday: 7:15 am to 5:30 pm

Friday: 7:15 am to 3 pm

Saturday: 8 am to noon

The center is closed on Monday and Tuesday to process the recyclables.

The following items are accepted:

- Clear, Green and Brown Glass Bottles and Jars
- Aluminum Cans (no aluminum pie plates or tin cans)
- #1 PET plastic – rinsed, such as soda and water bottles
- #2 HDPE plastic – ALL COLORS – rinsed, such as milk jugs and detergent bottles
- Cardboard
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Ads / Junk Mail
- Mixed office paper
- Electronics (NO appliances)
- Cell Phones and cell phone chargers

Hazardous Material Disposal & Recycling

- Automobile Motor Oil can be recycled at most Auto Parts Stores.
- Compact Fluorescent Bulbs can be recycled at any Home Depot.
- Rechargeable batteries can be recycled at Batteries Plus in Tyler.

## GREEN ENERGY SERVICE PROVIDERS

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Texas Electrical Choice is an educational campaign created by the Public Utility Commission of Texas to inform Texans about electric competition and changes in the way consumers buy electricity. Texas' electrical market is open to competition, giving most Texans the opportunity to choose their electrical service provider. We encourage homeowners to consider obtaining their electricity services from a provider committed to environmentally-sound practices. You can visit [www.powertochoose.com](http://www.powertochoose.com) to view the various service provider options. Many providers will list the environmental information on the source of their power to aid you in making the right decision.

## OPTIMIZING ENERGY & WATER USE

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This home has been constructed to save energy and provide comfort. Leaky homes waste a tremendous amount of energy.

### Ventilation

- The kitchen exhaust vents directly to the outside. It is a good practice to use this while cooking on the stove top. Use the low speed unless you need to get rid of smoke.
- Open windows and doors and ceiling fans are great for keeping the home comfortable much of the year. Remember to turn off the A/C when the windows or doors are open.

### Lighting

- Your house contains LED lighting, which is a very energy efficient form of lighting.
- Your house also contains Fluorescent and compact fluorescent lighting (CFL). These bulbs cost a little more than regular bulbs upfront, but use significantly less energy and last much longer. They also generate very little heat which is important in the cooling season. They are available now in several color ranges that reflect natural lighting. Do not use dimmers unless the bulb is specifically intended for that use.

### Heating / Cooling

- Change the filters as needed. Your system has a MERV 11 filter that only needs to be changed once per year. How dirty your filter gets depends on several factors, including pets, keeping doors or windows open, living in a dusty area, etc.
- Your HVAC system contains a humidistat that keeps the relative humidity in an ideal range of 30% - 60%.

### Water

- Your home is equipped with dual flush toilets. Push the flush lever backwards for a more efficient liquid waste only flush, or forward for a solid waste flush.
- Repair all leaky faucets. One drop per second can waste as much as 10 gallons of water per day.
- Take showers rather than baths. A typical shower requires only half as much hot water as an average tub bath.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator. Don't let the tap run while you are waiting for cool water to flow.
- Don't let water run while shaving, washing your face, or brushing your teeth. This saves 2 gallons of water per minute.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a half-filled sink rather than under running water.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

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Tyler Transit, operated by the City of Tyler, provides public transportation services throughout Tyler. Service hours are Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM and on Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

The basic fare is currently \$0.75 for adults; \$0.35 for elderly or disabled; and \$0.25 for children under 12. Exact change is needed upon boarding. If more than one route is needed to reach a destination, passengers can request a bus transfer upon payment and will be able to board the transfer bus at no additional cost.

For more information, visit [www.visitt Tyler.com/travel\\_public.php](http://www.visitt Tyler.com/travel_public.php).

## SAFETY VALVES & CONTROLS

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### Gas Shut Off

- The main gas shut off is located on the North side of the house on the gas meter. This will shut off the gas supply to the home. This is also a manifold shut off at the top of the attic stairs in the attic. There are individual shut offs by each gas supplied appliance, including the Rinnai tankless water heater, the stove top, the fireplace and the outside grill.

### Electrical Shut Off

- The main circuit breaker panel is in the garage. The main breaker is at the top of the panel and that will kill power into the home. There are also individual breakers to kill power to the separate circuits in the home, and they are labeled with their purpose. **Caution...inside the panel, the power is still on. Only a qualified electrician should remove the panel.**
- There are separate shut-offs for the Solar PV System. There is a DC Disconnect on the Sunnyboy Inverter located in the garage that disconnects the PV Array from the Inverter, and there is an AC Service Disconnect located outside the house on the wall next to the Utility Meter that disconnects the solar system from your Electric Service Provider's System.

### Water Shut Off

- The main shut off for water for the house is located in front of the southeast bedroom. There are also shut off valves located at the Water Heater, and at each water fixture (i.e. toilets, sinks, etc.)
- Your house is also equipped with a Manibloc valve system located in the garage. This will allow you to shut off water to individual locations in your house for maintenance. It is labeled similarly to the electrical breaker panel.

### Irrigation Control

- Your sprinkler system control is located in the garage just inside the garage door on the North wall.

## **ORGANIC PEST CONTROL & FERTILIZERS**

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Most pest control and fertilization can be accomplished just as effectively without the use of harmful chemicals. Many options are available, and can be found at many home centers such as Lowe's and The Home Depot. A good online source is [www.CleanAirGardening.com](http://www.CleanAirGardening.com). Do a google search for "Organic Pest Control" for many more options.