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Lee Wetherington Homes leads Sarasota-Bradenton-Venice in ENERGY STAR homes with 55 percent of total

Builder exhibits ENERGY STAR, Green Building features in model homes

SARASOTA, FL—**Lee Wetherington Homes, an official ENERGY STAR® partner, continues to lead the area in certifying ENERGY STAR homes**, according to the U.S. government's ENERGY STAR website:

www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showAreaResults&s_code=FL&msa_id=306.

During the last reporting period, from October 2008 through September 2009, **25 site-built homes in the Sarasota-Bradenton-Venice area met the stringent ENERGY STAR requirements. Lee Wetherington Homes built 10 of the 25 homes, or 40 percent. Of 53 total homes qualified in the Sarasota-Bradenton-Venice area, Lee Wetherington Homes built 29 of them, or 55 percent.** All of the Lee Wetherington Homes met ENERGY STAR standards and some exceeded them, reducing energy usage by over 20 percent, Wetherington said. The custom home builder has received the ENERGY STAR rating in every home the company constructed since November 1, 2007, said Lee Wetherington, president and founder of the company named “America’s Best Builder.”

Wetherington invites interested persons to tour his company’s models, where they can review the many energy-saving features first-hand. Two such models are the Pinehurst and the multi-award-winning Sarezzo (Green Home award, University of Florida; Winner for Best Kitchen, Best Overall, Parade of Homes), both located in Country Club East in Lakewood Ranch.

“Lee Wetherington Companies is one of our area's premier ENERGY STAR builders,” said Dennis Stroer, a nationally certified Class 1 Energy Rater. Stroer is the owner of Florida-based Calcs-Plus, which evaluates homes for compliance with ENERGY Star specifications. “ENERGY STAR-qualified homes are 25 to 30 percent more efficient than requirements for the IECC (International Energy Conservation Code),” he adds.

Lee Wetherington Companies is also a leader in Green Building. Although a number of builders observe Green Building standards in select homes, few have matched Wetherington’s commitment to include every home the company builds, according to Drew Smith, LEED AP, CHIEQP, CGB, GBTP. “Lee Wetherington Companies was the first builder to go Green across the board in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. This decision is significant because Green Certified Homes are energy-efficient, healthy,

resource-conserving, sustainable, and less costly to operate,” Smith said. He is the president of Two Trails, Inc., a third-party certifying agent that evaluates buildings for their compliance with Green Building standards.

The Sarezzo and Pinehurst models are open for inspection from 10:00 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. each Monday through Saturday and from noon to 5:00 p.m. every Sunday. To visit these models, located in Valderrama at Country Club East, Lakewood Ranch, take I-75 to University Parkway (Exit 213) and head east. Turn left on Lorraine Road, right on Masters Avenue, left on Ravelston Blvd. and right on Valderrama Way. For further information, call 941-907-7019, visit www.lwhomes.com or write to info@lwhomes.com.

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2009 Best Builder – Readers’ Choice Award, *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*
America’s Best Builder – National Association of Home Builders & *Builder Magazine*
100% ENERGY STAR Partner | Florida Green Build Certified | FPL BuildSmart Certified

Lee Wetherington Companies currently offers award-winning, ENERGY STAR and Greenbuild certified homes in several Sarasota and Manatee County communities at prices from the high \$200Ks to over \$1 million. In Manatee County, the company builds homes in Rye Wilderness, 2.4 miles north of SR 64; and several neighborhoods in Lakewood Ranch: Country Club East (Leopard Creek/Valderrama, Camargo/Royal Valley); Greenbrook Preserve, Greenbrook Ravines and The Country Club (Highfield, La Cantera). In Sarasota County, the builder offers homes in The Founders Club, an enclave of exclusive homes and private golf course on Fruitville Road three miles east of I-75; and in Willow Chase, on Laurel Road in Venice. In addition, Lee Wetherington Homes works with owners to build one-of-a-kind homes on privately owned (non-development) homesites in both Manatee and Sarasota County.

ENERGY STAR® was introduced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to reduce air pollution through increased energy efficiency. Today, with assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy, the ENERGY STAR program offers businesses and consumers energy-efficient solutions to save energy and money, and help fight global climate change. More than 8,000 organizations have become ENERGY STAR partners and are committed to improving the energy efficiency of products, homes and businesses. For more information about ENERGY STAR, visit www.energystar.gov or call toll-free 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937).