



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Official Opening of Riverdale NetZero EQUilibrium™ Demonstration House in Edmonton, Alberta**

**EDMONTON, Alberta, September 05, 2008** — Today, Peter Goldring, Member of Parliament for Edmonton East, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, and Minister responsible for CMHC announced that the Riverdale NetZero Project will officially open in October 2008. This energy-efficient and environmentally responsible house will be the second EQUilibrium™ house to open in Alberta.

The demonstration home was built in Edmonton by a team led by Habitat Studio and Workshop Ltd., as part of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) EQUilibrium™ Sustainable Housing Demonstration Initiative, which encourages builders and developers to build the next generation of sustainable housing in Canada.

"The Government of Canada is proud to work with innovative private-sector partners, such as Habitat Studio and Workshop Ltd., to develop environmentally responsible homes," said MP Goldring. "The Riverdale NetZero Project gives people in Edmonton an opportunity to see first-hand the next generation of healthy, sustainable housing in Canada."

EQUilibrium™ demonstration homes are designed to be healthy to live in, produce as much energy as they consume on an annual basis, and have very low environmental impact. Under the leadership of Habitat Studio & Workshop Ltd, Solnorth Engineering Ltd. and Howell Mayhew Engineering Inc., a team of 40 Edmonton-area experts have built a duplex that is designed to surpass the net zero energy goal. This was achieved by aggressively reducing energy consumption for space heating, water heating, lighting and appliances. These homes use roughly a quarter of the total energy used by equivalent conventional homes. The active solar thermal systems provide 64 per cent of the space heating and 93 per cent of the water heating. The grid-connected solar photovoltaic system provides all of the homes' electricity for lighting and appliances, as well as the remaining space and water heating.

"When we first started this project, I thought that net zero energy buildings in our climate were barely possible," says Peter Amerongen, president of Habitat Studio. "Thanks to this incredible team and with the help of CMHC's leadership, we've managed to whittle our way down to zero with a group of strategies that are, for the most part, quite practical. The extra costs are not insignificant, but from the extensive modeling we did for this project and the practical lessons we've learned from building it, we're seeing some of those costs coming down for the next net zero houses that we are building."

The Riverdale NetZero Project is one of 12 projects that won CMHC's national EQUilibrium™ sustainable housing competition in 2007 and are now turning their design concepts into real homes. All EQUilibrium™ homes will be open for public and professional audiences for demonstration, and then monitored for performance by CMHC for one year, once occupied.

CMHC's EQUilibrium™ Sustainable Housing Demonstration Initiative provides a new approach to housing in Canada, representing a fundamental change in the way Canadians think about their homes. It strives to balance our housing

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needs with those of the environment. It brings together — under one roof — the principles of occupant health and comfort, energy efficiency, renewable energy production, resource and water conservation, and reduced environmental impact.

CMHC has worked closely with many stakeholders to develop and deploy EQUilibrium™. In particular, CMHC has collaborated closely with Natural Resources Canada which has contributed substantial research and development expertise and resources to advancing this initiative.

As Canada's national housing agency, CMHC draws on more than 60 years of experience to help Canadians access a variety of quality, environmentally sustainable, and affordable homes — homes that will continue to create vibrant and healthy communities and cities across the country.

For more information, call 1-800-668-2642.

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