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SERVING GREEN VALLEY, SAHUARITA, CORONA DE TUCSON, AMADO, ARIVACA, TUMACACORI, TUBAC, RIO RICO **SUNDAY**

GV builder sets new standards

By Ellen Sussman

Special to the Green Valley News

Dave Grounds, president and CEO of Dorn Homes, is helping to re-define the meaning of "green" in Green Valley.

During the past two years, he's met with energy experts and has come away saying, "Based on current utility costs, homes could be 60 to 70 percent more energy efficient than homes built five years ago."

He said most climate scientists now believe that the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere when fossil fuels are burned is contributing

to global climate change. At the same time buildings consume a lot of energy — \$305 billion worth in the U.S. in 2003 — even while resources are finite.

"Most homeowners don't realize that the level of greenhouse emissions by a home is twice that emitted by a car. The house runs itself by energy from gas and electric companies, which create carbon dioxide emissions. These are the same as greenhouse gas emissions.

"For these reasons, reducing the amount of energy that dwellings consume is among the most

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DAVE GROUNDS, Dorn Homes president and CEO, looks over the design of one the company's new Solar Smart Homes.

DORN: Builder sets new standards

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important goals of green building," Grounds said.

According to his standards, any "green" theme home should include the following:

- Site work minimizing the environmental impact during and after construction;
- Energy efficiency;
- Water efficiency;
- Healthful indoor air quality;
- Use of recycled materials and materials whose production can be sustained without harming people or the environment; this includes "low volatile organic compounds" in carpet and paint and flooring choices from fast-growing, cultivated bamboo, lyptus hardwood and reclaimed timber salvaged from deconstructed buildings.

Dorn Homes will soon be unveiling new solar-powered "green" homes at Alamos and Stone House in Green Valley and the Sanctuary in Tubac.

Called "Solar Smart Homes," they're designed to be approxi-

mately 65 percent more efficient than the average home.

"We're re-engineering the American home to save our owners thousands of dollars in utility bills while providing some of the best-built and healthiest homes in America.

"As energy costs continue to soar the world becomes more sensitive to our planet's dwindling resources... Dorn Homes has instituted what we hope will become the new Standard of Building Science for all homebuilders," Grounds said.

From the start, home building has been more than a business for him; it was a passion fueled by deeply-held beliefs. Grounds said it could be a better world by rethinking how homes and communities are designed and constructed.

To this goal, he's been working with leading engineers and scientists including the U.S. Department of Energy's Building America Program, Tucson Electric Power's En-

ergy Guarantee Program and Unisource Energy.

Grounds said Dorn's high performance Solar Smart Homes will benefit residents in three categories: by reducing energy consumption by 60 to 70 percent as compared to typical construction; money-back rebates and third-party certifications and a healthy home living environment.

At Stone House, the Diamond Ventures gated luxury community adjacent to Quail Creek, one Dorn home is being constructed with the Icynene Insulation System, which has been selected as the insulation of choice in over 100,000 healthy, energy-efficient and green-building projects. "There aren't many points in life where you can make a difference... it's time to do the right thing—as a homeowner and as a builder. By doing the right things you'll save thousands in utility bills; more importantly you'll help save the planet."

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