



Minto Communities receives LEED™ for homes certification and ENERGY STAR for New Homes

Harvest Hills will offer superior energy efficient, quality designed homes set among hiking and biking trails

TORONTO, ON – September 24, 2008 – Minto Communities Inc. announced today that its Saunders single-family showhome in East Gwillimbury are the first of its LEED™ certified homes in Canada. This was achieved as part of the Canada Green Building Council's (CaGBC) national case study program to develop a formal rating system for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) homes in Canada.

“Minto has taken a strong leadership position in the green building industry, evidenced by the fact that we have a dedicate green team who work on reducing our environmental impact and finding better ways to build high quality comfortable homes,” explained Andrew Pride, Vice President, Minto Green Team. “We believe in building energy efficient, healthier, green homes, and we want to prove it to our customers, through independent third party testing and verification to certify that our homes are as good as we say they are,” he added.

In the GTA, Minto is renowned for certifying all of its Toronto hi-rise buildings to LEED™ standards. In fact, they were awarded the ‘Green Builder of the Year Award’ at this year’s Ontario Home Builders Awards. The company has now committed to building all its homes to ENERGY STAR® for New Homes specifications, while still helping to champion the development of a LEED®-Canada for Homes program.

To commemorate this certification of Canada’s first LEED™ Silver home, Minto held a grand opening celebration today in East Gwillimbury. The Honourable James Young, mayor of East Gwillimbury; Peter Love, Chief Energy Conservation Officer for Ontario Power Authority, and Andrew Pride, Vice President of Minto’s Green division were all onsite to help celebrate this milestone for Minto. The group participated in an official tree planting ceremony outside of the LEED™ Silver model showhome to symbolize the occasion.

Minto is a founding sponsor of the LEED®-Canada for Homes pilot initiative, commissioned to develop a long-term environmentally sustainable program for new homes in Canada. The CaGBC’s case study program was launched last fall, and follows the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) LEED™ for Homes rating system as a guideline to develop an official rating system in Canada, tailored specifically for Canadian climates, construction practices and regulations. Findings from this study will be integrated into a formal LEED®-Canada for Homes program, scheduled to be released in early 2009.

“This home and the many other energy efficient and green homes that Minto has built represent the sort of industry leadership that Ontario needs to help us address our conservation needs,” noted Peter Love, Chief Energy Conservation Officer at the Ontario Power Authority. “Consumers, government, and industry all need to work together to manage Ontario’s growing power needs”.

Minto’s LEED™ home is situated in Minto’s new Harvest Hills community located on Green Lane West near Yonge Street in East Gwillimbury. This community is ideally situated to be close to both nature and the urban metropolis of Toronto.

“Minto’s Harvest Hills Community will be built entirely to ENERGY STAR® for New Homes specifications, by increasing insulation and draft proofing levels, adding high efficiency combination space and hot water heating systems, improving air quality with heat recovery ventilation (HRV) systems, and saving electricity through high efficiency ECM fan motors and compact fluorescent lights,” notes Kelvin Gibson, General Manager for Minto Communities (Toronto) Inc. “We believe this is one of the best ENERGY STAR® packages on the market. ENERGY STAR® Homes by Minto are affordable, healthy, and energy efficient - the perfect combination,” adds Mr. Gibson.

The Town of East Gwillimbury is the first Municipality in Canada to adopt a town-wide ENERGY STAR® standard for new residential development. All of the homes in Minto’s Harvest Hills community and throughout its other Canadian single family home sites are built to ENERGY STAR® for New Homes specifications, and new homeowners receive this as a standard feature.

“This is a success story on many levels,” noted James Young, mayor of East Gwillimbury. “Because East Gwillimbury took the initiative to require ENERGY STAR® certification on all new homes built within this municipality, Minto has implemented the program here, and realized so much benefit from the program that they are now working toward having all of its homes in Canada built this way. That is over 1000 detached single family new homes a year,” added Mayor Young.

The showhome is located within walking distance (800 meters) of more than 11 basic community resources such as restaurants, doctors offices, retail and parks. No invasive plants used in the home’s landscaping design (plants which are not native to the region, and are prone to spreading), and only drought tolerant turf was used, coupled with a high efficiency irrigation system.

Minto currently has three executive townhomes in the Harvest Hills community in East Gwillimbury that have also been registered in the CaGBC’s LEED® -Canada for Homes case study program. These units are expected to also receive a LEED™ certified rating before the end of the year.

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Minto Group Inc. is a family owned real estate development, construction and management company with operations in Ottawa, Toronto, and Florida. The company currently manages more than 15,000 residential rental homes and apartments in Ottawa and Toronto and carries a commercial portfolio of more than 2 million square feet of office, retail and industrial space. Minto provides quality residential and commercial accommodations to satisfy the needs of the marketplace as well support and enhance the growth and well being of the communities in which it operates. Since 1955, Minto has built more than 60,000 new homes. For more information visit www.minto.com.

The Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC) is the leading national industry organization advancing green building practices for livable communities. The CaGBC represents 1,600 member organizations involved in the design, construction and operation of buildings, real estate and community development. According to the CaGBC, a home must reach a designated point score based on eight principal LEED™ categories – Sustainable Sites; Water Efficiency; Energy and Atmosphere; Materials and Resources; Indoor Environmental Quality; Innovation and Design; Awareness and Education; and Locations and Linkages. The Council also implements the LEED™ Green Building Rating System in Canada. For information, visit www.cagbc.ca.