

Community Homes News

Bi-Monthly Journal of Cape Coral, Florida

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Community Homes LLC
AN EXCEPTIONAL BUILDER



this issue

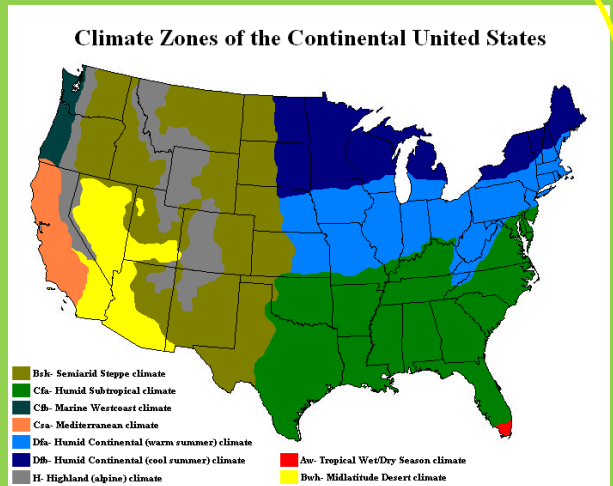
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Does going Green save Greenbacks?

It has been the rage for many builders to get on the “Green” bandwagon and upsell these items to their customers. We’re being told that the products are great and perfect and are just plain performing miracles, and even though many of the items are more expensive (up to double the cost of a conventional built home) than what is currently being used, we should do our part. Using them will help improve the atmosphere, reduce the cutting of trees, decrease the carbon footprint, shrink the hole in the ozone layer and decrease the depletion of our raw materials. It is true that in many cases in certain locations using green components are the right thing to do.

But we are not getting the whole truth, that some of the products that are available today and right now, are not as efficient or cost effective in South Florida as we’ve been led to believe. We’re not informed of what materials are being used to produce them and what their effects are.

The U. S. is comprised of many regional climate conditions, from near arctic to sub-tropical and most energy conservative products are designed to be most effective in the temperate zones. In fact, the State of Florida is actual in 2 zones, the temperate and the sub-tropical, with the line being approximately drawn across the state at Lake Okeechobee.



Due to its large size and wide range of geographic features, the United States contains examples of nearly every global climate. The climate is temperate in most areas, subtropical in the Deep South, tropical in Hawaii and southern Florida (aka tropical wet/dry season climate, polar in Alaska, semiarid in the Great Plains west of the 100th meridian, Mediterranean in coastal California and in the Great Basin.*

* Courtesy of Wikipedia

Manufacturers of any product have to maximize their customer base and consequently build their items to appeal to the largest customer base. Cape Coral is in the smallest climate zone with some of the most unique conditions which results in manufacturers making products that do not operate here to the same efficiency of the rest of the continental United States. Information regarding the operation and payback times for products installed in South Florida are sometimes quite difficult to obtain; even on the internet.

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A look at news On and about Cape Coral

The area's performing arts schedule begins this month.

- Florida Repertory Theatre in Ft. Myers starts their season with "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play", it plays through Dec. 18. Call 239-332-4488 for information.
- The Southwest Florida Symphony appears at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Art Hall on December 18 performing "Holiday Pops, Timeless Treasures" call 239-418-1500 for tickets.
- The Gulf Coast Symphony starts their season on December 15, contact 239-277-1700 for schedule.
- "Shrek The Musical" is at Barbara B Mann Performing Arts Hall until December 4, their number is 239-481-4849.
- Broadway Palm Dinner theatre opens it's season with "Irving Berlin's White Christmas" through December 25. 239-278-4422
- The Alliance for the Arts presents free outdoor concerts, presentations and special presentations. Dana Paul & Spinning Wheel, a Blood, Sweat & Tears tribute band will be performing on Dec. 11.
- "A Pirates Christmas", a 90 minute cruise departing from Fort Myers Beach that sails around the area's intracoastal islands & beaches with a scurvy but friendly crew of pirates to entertain the passengers, will have Santa joining the crew on select cruises. Contact 765-7272 for prices and schedules.

The above listing is only a small portion of performing arts organizations and entertainment venues in the Greater Ft. Myers, Cape Coral & Naples Area, contact Florida Weekly Arts & Entertainment at www.FloridaWeekly.com for complete listings.

- Council Winners of the Cape Coral Municipal Election were John Carioscia in District 2 with 57% , Lenny Nesta in District 3 with 55%, Rana Erbrick in District 5 with 53% and Derrick Donnell in District 7 with 51% of the vote.
- The City of Cape Coral offers a variety of Economic Business Incentives, including a Cash Incentive Program, Impact Fee Deferral Program, Façade Grand and a Rental Assistance Program

Holiday Festival of Lights- December 3rd from 5:00PM to 9:00PM



Mark the beginning of the holiday season with music and the city's official tree lighting ceremony. where thousands of residents attend and stroll along Cape Coral Parkway. Resi-

dents can listen and watch performances from various local schools and organizations while visiting downtown shops and businesses for the holiday season. Bring the whole family out to the Festival for entertainment, pictures with Santa Claus, kids area, and much more. SNOWPILE: 25 tons of snow will be delivered and set up for kids to have a great time while going down the slide and take pictures!

Cape Bike Night Saturday, December 10, 2011- 5:00-10:00 p.m.



47th Terrace between Coronado and Vincennes

The City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation is proud to bring you Cape Bike Night! Motorcycle enthusiasts can get together and listen to live bands, eat great food, and just have fun at this great event! For more information call 239-573-3125

Holiday Boat-a-Long December 18, 2011 (Four Freedoms Park-4818 Tarpon Court) 4:00 P.M. to 9 P.M.

Boat Parade starts at 7:00 PM



One of the oldest city events boasts over 100 decorated boats meandering through Cape Coral's canals decorated in a festive holiday fashion with lights, costumes, elves, and whatever else their captains can think of. At Four Freedoms Park, the landlubbers watch the boats gather in the Bimini Basin before they begin meandering through the canals of south Cape Coral. Along with providing an ideal seat to watch the illuminated vessels, the park features live holiday music, decorated trees, Christmas crafts, food and beverages for sale.

Reliability

*It's being where you should be
when you are needed*



October & November has been active for us and we thank our existing customers who have gone out of their way to endorse our products and to allow us to show their homes. Without them and the homes we build for them we could never have become the exceptional builder we aspire to be.

1.) Homes under construction:

Mr. & Mrs. Kirschstein, 2802 SW 35th St. (Main Street Model)	Frame & Mechanicals
Mr. & Mrs. Hannecke, 5634 Deauville Ct. (Custom Home)	Frame & Mechanicals
Mr. & Mrs. Skog, 5749 Flamingo Dr. (Custom Home)	Block wall
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Rutkai, 3314 SW 2nd St. (Royal Palm Sq. Model)	Slab
Agybe LLC., 4940 SW 2nd Pl. (Custom Home)	Footer
Investor Marlin Spec, 4341 SW 5th Pl.	Footer
Investor Custom Marlin Spec, 542 SE 33rd St. (4 Bdrm., Den, 3.5 bath, Vanishing edge pool, 3 car garage)	Slab
Investor Custom Spec, 2502 SW 52nd Lane	Seawall
Investor Marlin Spec, 4213 SW 5th Place	Seawall

2.) Homes in permitting:

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3.) Designing custom homes, doing revisions, awaiting approvals.

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History of Cape Coral, Part 3

Most people are aware that Cape Coral is the largest city between Tampa and Miami, and also the city with the most canals in the world. It stands to reason the where canals meet roads, something has to happen; usually that means a bridge. It's amazing to learn that from 1957 until 1964, the only access from Ft. Myers to downtown Cape Coral was a 40 mile roundtrip drive over the Edison bridge on roads, sometimes dirt, that required between 1.5 to 2 hours to circumnavigate. The first major solution to the problem was a bridge connecting College Parkway in Ft. Myers to Cape Coral Parkway in Cape Coral. The bridge, whose planning started in 1958 is a 3,400 ft. 2 lane span and was opened on March 14, 1964 cutting travel time to 20 minutes or so. It was to remain that way until 1989 when a parallel span was built thereby doubling the number of lanes. In 1997, the 6 lane Midpoint Memorial (toll) Bridge opened connecting Colonial Blvd. in Ft. Myers to Veterans Pkwy in Cape Coral Bridge. The Caloosahatchee River spans are not the only bridges in Cape Coral. In a place with 115 square miles of land and 400 miles of canals, there is no shortage of bridges (although that statement is contested by many). There are salt water lots with and without river access and thousands of lots on the many miles of interconnected freshwater canals and lakes. In spite of the many bridges, the abundance of homes and home sites combined with the combination of streets carrying on for miles across tens of canals, drivers will often wind up standing outside his car, scratching his head and looking at the house he wants to get to just across an 80 foot canal with no bridge. The astute newcomer soon learns that a city map and constantly checking it is as necessary as gas to get around the our beautiful community. Just be prepared that even with a map, when you stop and ask for instructions, you are bound to hear the oft repeated phrase, "You can't get there from here".

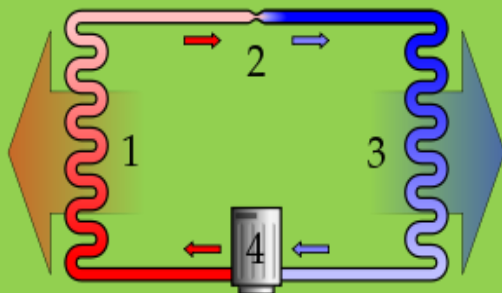
Some products that are right on target for all climates are the many passive items (passive items use no electricity or power to operate, thereby creating a benefit with no ongoing expense) some of which are; fiberglass insulation installed above the home ceiling in the attic (anything over R38 has little or no effect); fiberglass board insulation on exterior walls; low-e glass windows & sliding glass doors with inert gas or vacuum sandwiched between two panes of tinted glass (to lower the UV light from entering the home envelope); mastic sealed ductwork to prevent conditioned air from escaping; perforated soffit panels and off-roof passive venting to allow hot air to rise and escape allowing lower temperature air to enter and circulate.

Other "green" items comparable in price to competitive products; hardwood floors vs. renewable bamboo, which with processing can be used for multiple products from fibers to flooring, fabrics to paper and is easily recycled to produce additional products. It is a fast growing,



environment friendly plant that actually helps to return nutrients to overused and depleted lands. Another benefit is using interlocking paver tiles for driveways, walks and pool decks vs. poured concrete: Concrete is a site poured product that is installed in any type of weather and humidity which allows the concrete to dry and season differently from one batch to another (uncontrolled seasoning is one of the chief reasons for cracked driveways, walks and decks). Repairs entail cutting out bad areas, disposing of debris at local landfill and repouring of the concrete. On the other hand, pavers are poured in factories under controlled conditions which makes for a uniform paver. Repairs to paved areas are rare, but easily accomplished by removing the existing paver(s), adding or subtracting the sand bedding/joint filler and resetting.

Here in the Subtropical zone, it is not widely known that the further south you are of the temperate zone, the less efficient a heat pump becomes. A heat pump (heat exchanger) can be used to air condition a home by using ambient air or underground geothermal pipes to give the heat pump a "boosted" starting temperature, but with high ambient outside temperatures here in the subtropical zone, it uses more energy to lower the home to the desired temperature, and the need for heat is



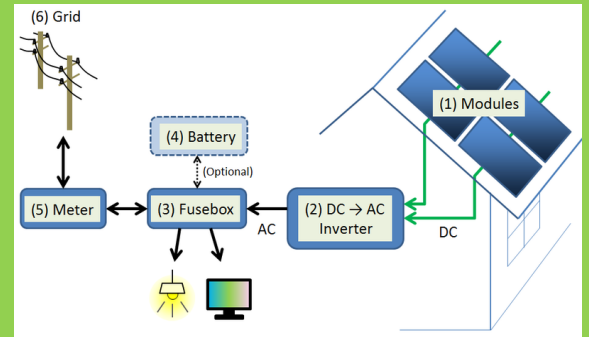
A simple stylized diagram of a heat pump's vapor-compression refrigeration cycle: 1) condenser, 2) expansion valve, 3) evaporator, 4) compressor.*

*Wikipedia

so limited that the realization of the efficiencies of a heat pump are never attained. The logic of digging a hole five feet deep to install the underground pipes for geothermal control into ground where the wet season water table is close to one foot below original ground just puts the pipes into a hole filled with water. Typically a whole house air conditioner with a 10KW or 15 KW heat strip is used for the everyday temperature control of a home and the relative lack of need of heating makes the electrical cost negligible or at least manageable, while the higher purchasing & installation costs and breakeven payoff times of installing a heat pump take longer than the potential life of the unit.

Photovoltaic systems (Solar powered electricity) look perfect for southern Florida, with all our sunshine and bright days it would appear that we should be able to be independent of most electrical needs. It is true that photovoltaic power is a passive source of electricity, with no operating costs to speak of, but the drawback is the initial cost of the installation and the limitations on the continuous supply of power. The Solar systems are

Simplified schematics of a grid-connected residential PhotoVol-taic (solar) power



relatively expensive, approx. \$54,000 for a 5K system (without battery storage) and the Florida rebate program is out of funds with installations dating from 2009 still waiting for rebates. The payback period for that amount of funds will be longer than the life of the hardware. With no power being generated during nights and cloudy/rainy days and no storage batteries, (storage batteries and housing for them could double or triple the cost of the system) homeowners are still dependent on receiving power from their local utility provider and paying a monthly power bill. Further research & development is necessary before residential PV power is affordable for the average person.

Being green is truly an admirable goal for all of us, but care should be taken when looking at "green" items; if a product that costs 150% of commonly used items uses less energy or is made of recycled products, but only lasts half the time of conventional products, than the item winds up using twice the raw materials and three times the cost of the original products.

Until efficiencies improve and costs decrease, we can still use as much green technology as possible; Low-E windows, fluorescent lighting and using programmable thermostats are but a few ways to accomplish our goal. As a TV star frog once said, "It ain't easy being green" and it isn't cheap either.

Do your research and don't let going green put you in the red.

Standards, not Upgrades!!!

All Community Homes, LLC. new construction homes include as standard items:

- Solid wood cabinet doors in a variety of colors and styles, not press-board, Thermofoil cabinet doors.
- Built-in Taexx Pest control system built into every home.
- Paver Driveway, walkways and Lanai decking instead of cheaper poured concrete.
- Low-E double pane windows and sliders instead of plain tinted windows.
- Corian or Granite (level 1) Kitchen Countertops, NOT mica or lesser quality solid surface counter tops
- Cultured Marble vanity tops with integrated sinks in lieu of mica and drop in bathroom vanity sinks.
- Floor tile choices include 16" & 18" ceramic tile.
- 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty included at no additional cost.
- On homes with pools, all decking is sand set paver tile not poured or stamped concrete (which are subject to cracking).
- Active Builder hands-on involvement, including checking level and if all walls in the home (interior & exterior) are square.
- Owner, Doug Laskowitz's 30 + years of Class 1 licensed builder experience, total attention to detail , commitment to excellence, top quality and customer satisfaction.
- In fact, we can take any one of our standard models and customize it to your specifications, and if we stay in the same footprint and use the same amount of materials there is no additional charge for the customized designing.

Community Homes, LLC commits to delivering to you, our customer the home you want and need at a price and time you need it.

Proud Member of:

[CCCIA - www.cccia.org](http://www.cccia.org)

[Lee Building Industry Association - www.bia.net](http://www.bia.net)

[Cape Coral Chamber of Commerce](http://www.capecoralchamber.com)

www.capecoralchamber.com



Doug Laskowitz
Owner, President and Builder
Community Homes, LLC

Nominated for Builder of the Year
Winner of more than 20 Pinnacle
Awards, including "Best Product
Design" six times

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Community Homes, LLC
CGC 1514719

Model Center 3114 Chiquita Blvd. S.
Cape Coral, FL. 33914

Mailing Address P.O. Box 152723
Cape Coral, FL 33915-2723

Toll Free 866-327-2164

Telephone 239.541.2775

Fax 239.541.2721

Website www.capecommunityhomes.com

Information info@capecommunityhomes.com