



—Photo by CAMERON RASMUSSEN

Barbara Schriber shows off the cottage she and her husband recently completed. The residence uses modern technology to increase efficiency without sacrificing the creature comforts.

SELLE VALLEY CONSTRUCTION BUILDS SMART, GREEN

By CAMERON RASMUSSEN
Staff writer

PONDERAY — Selle Valley Construction's mission is simple: build a better, smarter home.

With efficiency a greater priority in the construction, Selle Valley owners Scott and Barbara Schriber work to remain ahead of the pack. They're determined to outdo the averages by making their constructions a little tighter, a little more efficient and a little — dare they say — greener.

"The term 'green' can be a bit of a dirty word, because there are all these political associations that go along with it," Scott Schriber said. "But there's nothing political about saving money on your utility bills."

With those goals in mind, Selle Valley recently completed its first cottage, currently on the market with Sotheby

Realty for \$217,000. The project also proved their initial point: a house constructed with energy efficiency in mind doesn't equate a dramatically inflated mortgage.

That's because a project prioritizing efficiency can coordinate its systems and maximize results for fewer dollars.

"Efficiency impacts every decision we make during construction, from how we decide to position the house to what kind of sprinklers we're going to use," Schriber said.

Some of those coordinated systems include tight air barriers and thermal barriers to prevent heat loss, efficient lighting and appliances to reduce energy usage and smart water fixtures, toilets and a tankless hot water heating system to conserve water. According to the Schribers, all the ingredients add up to a final product that can save hundreds a month on utility

bills.

"The appliances and materials we've used in this house add probably a few thousand dollars to the final price tag," Barbara Schriber said. "On a 30-year mortgage, that's nothing. And given the utility savings compared to most homes, it pays for itself long before the mortgage is paid off."

And according to the Schribers, the new technologies improve more than the utility bill. They cited modern air filtration systems as particularly valuable both for efficiency and ability to improve the quality of a building's air.

"One of my girlfriends told me that she just didn't get the whole green building thing," Barbara Schriber said. "I told her, 'You don't feed your kids anything but organic food. But what about the air they're breathing?' She told me she'd never considered that."

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