

Emerging Trends in High Performance Housing: Health vs Net Zero Energy

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ABSTRACT

This session will describe two emerging - and sometimes diverging - trends in high performance housing. One trend is a broadening of "green" to include significant attention to human health impacts of buildings. While health has always been a part of sustainability, exciting new data (and some scary findings) are driving rapid change to a health-motivated perspective. A second major trend is the narrowing of "green" to single-minded pursuit of aggressive energy savings. Rising popularity of Passive House along with net-zero and near-zero housing is driving energy consumption in buildings to record lows. This session will present case studies of high performance single family and multifamily buildings to illustrate why some projects are choosing to focus their attention on a single important issue while others choose to cast a broader net in pursuit of the optimal balance of people, planet and profit.

BIOGRAPHY

Maureen McGeary Mahle is an engineer, building scientist, and green building consultant with Steven Winter Associates, Inc. As Director of Sustainable Housing Services, she supports project teams seeking green building certifications including LEED, National Green Building Standard, Enterprise Green Communities Criteria, and ENERGY STAR. To date, she has certified more than 12,000 green dwellings in 10 states, with over 9,000 more homes in progress. She works to tie human health to energy efficiency in green building, and her projects have been early adopters of the Active Design Guidelines and the WELL Building Standard.