

PureBlue

THE GREENEST GREEN IS BLUE

Brookfield Residential's PureBlue Concept Home Blends Energy Efficiency with Healthy Living

FAIRFAX, Va. — What does it take to build a healthy home? And if you build one, can you do it again and again? Can you make it efficient and sustainable and accessible to the everyday homebuyer?

These were among the questions that Robert Hubbell, president of Brookfield Residential's Washington, D.C., division, raised when he assembled a group of his sharpest, most forward-thinking team members.

There were no rules, he told them, no limitations. He challenged them to create something that would improve the way Brookfield Residential does business. He challenged them to innovate.

The result is The PureBlue Home.

It opened in March at the Avendale community in Northern Virginia. It's described as a concept home, designed to explore the latest healthy, energy-efficient technologies and find out how they fit with the way homeowners want to live today, tomorrow and far beyond.

The team is testing new technology to improve air quality and fight the spread of germs, new products to take the stress out of household chores, and new systems to reduce the home's impact on the environment.

"We've taken some of our best team members and given them the opportunity to be creative and take some risks, without any consequences of failure," Hubbell said. "What they've come up with is a home that is designed to create the best experience for a family living there. It's about energy efficiency and healthy living. It's healthy for that family and healthy for the environment."

The PureBlue Home is not unlike the concept cars that automakers produce each year, meant to test the latest innovations and show the public what is ultimately possible. It's a proving ground and the takeaways from the project are expected to yield healthier, more efficient homes for all of Brookfield Residential's homebuyers, sooner rather than later.

Healthy and Accessible

Brookfield Residential is not a small niche builder. The company builds homes and communities in 11 major North American markets, including more than a dozen communities in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware.

PureBlue

THE GREENEST GREEN IS BLUE

Building one healthy, sustainable home can certainly be done when money is no object. Making healthy features available and accessible to a wide swath of homebuyers? That's the challenge.

"The PureBlue Home is more than a model home. It's a test lab," said Mark Gregas, director of information technology. "Having a real home where you can implement that technology is critical because then we can say as a homebuilder that we know this technology works. We know this technology adds value for our customer. That's something we want to provide."

It begins with the air you breathe.

Brookfield Residential is experimenting with an advanced HVAC system that not only knows how to maintain the right temperature but also the ideal air quality. It's designed to constantly circulate clean, fresh air.

It's about creating a healthy living environment.

The bathroom is where most germs congregate within a house. And that's where Brookfield Residential is testing new technology to combat them. Start with the automatic flush toilet or the water-saving faucets that turn on or off with just the softest touch of a fingertip. They're more sanitary and help keep the entire house cleaner by reducing the spread of germs.

"Thankfully, we're well beyond the biggest problems of years gone by—lead paint, mold and asbestos," said production manager Marc Dalessio. "But in the average home, there are still any number of elements at play that contribute to an unhealthy environment. We're finding ways to get beyond them and make a home as healthy as possible."

A Growing Optimism

Creating a healthy home also means building in a way that's better for the environment. It's not always noticeable at first glance, but Brookfield Residential has left nothing out.

The recycled fly ash foundation is more durable, requires less water and emits fewer global warming gases. The reflective, low-energy house wrap used during construction adds insulation and also deflects 97 percent of radiant heat year round. The carpet is made of recycled textile fibers. It produces less waste and the manufacturing process produces lower emissions.

PureBlue

THE GREENEST GREEN IS BLUE

Outside the home, the landscaping includes native, low-water plants fed by a drip irrigation process. The Water Hog system captures and recycles rainwater to reduce flooding, erosion and runoff. It also means clean, healthy drinking water is available in case of emergencies.

“The uniqueness of this project is that the house itself is not just a standalone building,” Dustin Dorph, the project’s land development coordinator. “It’s actually an entire system that works with the climate, works with the interior of the building and all the different systems we have in place.”

Brookfield Residential will continue to test the effectiveness of the features included in the home, but team members are optimistic about the results. The home received a score of minus-1 on the industry’s standard Home Energy Rating System Index, meaning that it should create more energy than it consumes. A standard home built just five years ago scores a 103.

Equally important, visitors to the new home have been raving about the experience and asking about the various features. Though Brookfield Residential already offers a wide selection of healthy, efficient options within its Brookfield Blue program, The PureBlue Home is expected to lead to new options and ideas that will result in a better home environment throughout Brookfield Residential communities.

“There aren’t many homebuilders willing to dedicate the time and money to an experiment like this,” Hubbell said. “Over the years, we’ve learned that taking care of your homebuyers really is the best business model. A healthy home is a better home, and anyone who visits PureBlue knows that Brookfield Residential is working hard to build the healthiest homes out there.”