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USGBC Awards First LEED for Homes Platinum Certification in Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – June 24, 2009: Today with the assistance of Viridian, the first phase of homes at Vertical Modern Urban Lofts in Little Rock was awarded LEED Platinum by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for achievement in green homebuilding. Vertical Urban Modern Lofts is the first and only residential project in the state of Arkansas to achieve the LEED Platinum status.

LEED for Homes is a national third-party certification system for energy efficient, healthy, green homes. LEED-certified homes complete a technically rigorous process that includes a home energy rating and onsite inspections to verify that the home is built to be energy and water efficient, environmentally sound and a healthier place to live.

"We are extremely please by today's announcement," said Matt Bell, developer of Vertical Lofts. "The original goal was to achieve LEED Gold, but with the tremendous results in energy efficiency testing, we gained more points than anticipated."

Located in Downtown Little Rock, these three bedroom, three bath homes present the space, privacy and luxury of suburban living in a convenient centralized location. Exceeding Energy Star consumption standards by an astonishing 41%, these homes offer ecologically responsible amenities such as high efficiency heat and air, bamboo wood floors and tankless water heaters that boast substantially lower utility costs without sacrificing comfort or style.

Little Rock based sustainability consultants at Viridian worked with Vertical Lofts throughout the design and construction phases while coordinating the LEED certification process. "This project proves that 'green living' doesn't require homeowners to forgo the quality life that they've become accustomed to," said Chris Ladner, Partner of Viridian. "The utility savings only increase one's ability to maintain that quality."

"Our homes offer a very unique form and function for Little Rock housing alternatives. We have been successful in selling these homes due to the high quality construction and tremendous value of the energy savings over the life cycle of the home." said Bell. "Whether consumers are driven by an eco conscious, pure financial savings or both, more and more people are becoming interested in these energy efficient and environmentally friendly homes."

Vertical Modern Urban Lofts are located in Downtown Little Rock on North Pulaski Street near the Union Train Station. The second phase of Vertical Lofts is scheduled for completion in late 2009 and will also seek the LEED certification. Visit www.verticallofts.net for more information.

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ABOUT LEED

The LEED® Green Building Rating System™ is the national benchmark for the design, construction, and operations of high-performance green buildings. Visit the U.S. Green Building Council's web site at www.usgbc.org to learn more about LEED and green building.

About LEED® for Homes

LEED® for Homes is a third-party certification system for high-performance green homes. Developed and administered by USGBC, LEED for Homes awards points to projects in seven categories of environmental performance: Location & Linkages, Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Indoor Environmental Quality, Energy & Atmosphere, Homeowner Awareness, and Innovation and Design. To date, more than 540 homes have been LEED-certified, and over 13,000 have been registered and are under development. For more information, visit www.thegreenhomeguide.org.