



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2007; rev. 6/20/07

FOR INFORMATION.....Jack Johnson, NWMLS president & CEO, (425) 820-9200

..... **Sources quoted** - page 2

### **Northwest MLS Enabling Database Searches of Listings With Green Design Features**

KIRKLAND, Wash. (June 13, 2007) -- House hunters who want green design features in their future home have a new resource for identifying such properties in Washington state.

Northwest Multiple Listing Service, the largest full-service MLS in the Northwest, is enhancing its listing forms and database so properties with certain environmental certifications, energy efficient features and sustainable materials may be readily identified.

The changes, being implemented this week, culminate months of research, discussion and programming modifications, according to Jack Johnson, president and CEO of Northwest MLS. Ben Kaufman, co-owner and managing broker of GreenWorks Realty in Seattle, spearheaded efforts to add the green features.

"Green homes are increasingly sought after in the Northwest, and the addition of environmental categories to the NWMLS listings will significantly help homeowners' ability to find homes with green features," said Kaufman. With the new green checkboxes consumers can easily identify homes that meet specific criteria, Kaufman noted, adding, "This is an excellent example of how real estate agents lead the way to building better communities one house at a time."

Effective immediately, listing agents can use checkboxes for highlighting a home's green and resource-efficient features. Among the new fields are designations for homes that meet third-party certifications for Built Green™, Energy Star® and LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards.

Additionally, NWMLS created checkboxes for identifying various energy-efficient heating and cooling systems (with "solar" being a new field), and for renewable floor coverings such as bamboo, cork or other sustainable materials. In details about a property's lot, the listing agent may now check a box denoting drought resistant landscaping.

"These new categories in the Northwest MLS database offer benefits to buyers, sellers, home builders, remodelers and MLS members," said Meribeth Hutchings managing broker at Windermere Real Estate/Lake Stevens and a member of the NWMLS board of directors.

Hutchings, who served on the MLS ad hoc group to identify environmental categories, cited research from a survey conducted for a home builders' trade group that showed growing consumer demand for energy-efficient products and services. The survey, conducted by the Shelton Group, found that 78 percent of respondents would chose one home over another based on its energy efficiency and the majority would pay more for energy saving features.

"Northwest MLS has a reputation for being a leader among multiple listing services, so adding the environmental checkboxes was another way to demonstrate our commitment to innovation," Hutchings remarked. In recent years, NWMLS has been on the forefront of offering a Web-based database, sophisticated mapping programs and state-of-the-art lockboxes.

-more-

The addition of green fields to the Northwest MLS database follows a similar undertaking by Oregon’s Regional Multiple Listing Service (RMLS), making this region one of the few areas in the nation where it is possible to pinpoint homes with resource-efficient features.

Hutchings said the changes apply to newly built homes as well as existing homes that have been upgraded with energy efficient amenities. MLS members may search the database of single family homes and condominiums to find listings with green features that meet the desires of prospective homebuyers.

Northwest Multiple Listing Service, based in Kirkland, is owned by its member brokers. It currently encompasses nearly 2,100 companies with more than 26,000 sales associates. Together, they serve 19 counties, mostly in western Washington, plus Grant, Kittitas and Okanogan counties in the central part of the state.

###

**Sources quoted**

**Meribeth Hutchings**, Member, Northwest MLS Board of Directors and managing broker, Windermere Real Estate/Lake Stevens .....425-335-4666

**Ben Kaufman**, Co-owner and managing broker, GreenWorks Realty, Seattle .....206-283-8181

---

**About Built Green™**

BUILT GREEN Washington is a cooperative of Washington’s regional green home building programs. Most BUILT GREEN programs in Washington use a checklist that offers builders a menu of green building strategies with point values attributed to them. Programs award a BUILT GREEN rating (one to five Stars) to a home based on the number of points the builder achieves. Built Green homes are designed to provide homeowners with comfortable, durable, environmentally friendly homes that are cost-effective to own and operate. These resource-efficient homes are crafted to exceed building codes and provide homeowners with years of healthy, quality living, while protecting the precious Northwest environment. <http://www.builtgreen.net/> [www.builtgreenwashington.org](http://www.builtgreenwashington.org),

**About ENERGY STAR®**

Energy Star is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy designed to save money and protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices. Introduced by EPA in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency, the Energy Star label can be found on more than 50 different kinds of products as well as new homes. Products that have earned the Energy Star designation prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy-efficiency specifications set by the government. In 2006 alone, Americans, with the help of Energy Star, saved about \$14 billion on their energy bills while reducing the greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of 25 million vehicles. [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

**About LEED®**

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

LEED for Homes is a voluntary rating system that promotes the design and construction of high performance "green" homes. A green home uses less energy, water, and natural resources; creates less waste; and is healthier and more comfortable for the occupants. Benefits of a LEED home include lower energy and water bills; reduced greenhouse gas emissions; and less exposure to mold, mildew and other indoor toxins. The net cost of owning a LEED home is comparable to that of owning a conventional home. [www.usgbc.org/LEED](http://www.usgbc.org/LEED)