



Register photos/LUKE WARK

ABOVE: Greg Zimmerman, of Zimmerman Remodeling and Construction Inc. in Bellevue, stands in front of one of the green houses his company is building on Johnson's Island in Danbury Township. Zimmerman's company has been using energy-efficient products and building techniques for years, but he just recently was designated a Certified Green Professional by the National Association of Home Builders. **BELOW:** A 92 percent energy-efficient furnace, which is touted as one of many "green" products available today, is just one of the many products being used by Zimmerman Remodeling and Construction Inc.

Building for the future

Going 'green' becoming more of the norm with builders, buyers

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Building "green" isn't an imperative yet, but local builders say it will be in the near future.

"The whole idea of building green has really snowballed over the last two, three years," said Jeff Krabill, an entrepreneur who owns the eco-friendly Lake View Condominiums.

Krabill said technologies have matured, prices have dropped and the public is more aware than ever of the value of environmentally friendly buildings.

"I'm not sure they're at the point of demanding it, but they are certainly interested in it," he said.

As more consumers consider their own impact on the planet, more companies will vie to meet their demands.

Greg Zimmerman recently became

Want to go?

■ **WHAT:** Erie County Home Builders Show. The show will feature a variety of vendors and presenters in all areas of home construction and renovation, including green technologies.

■ **WHEN:** Feb. 20-22

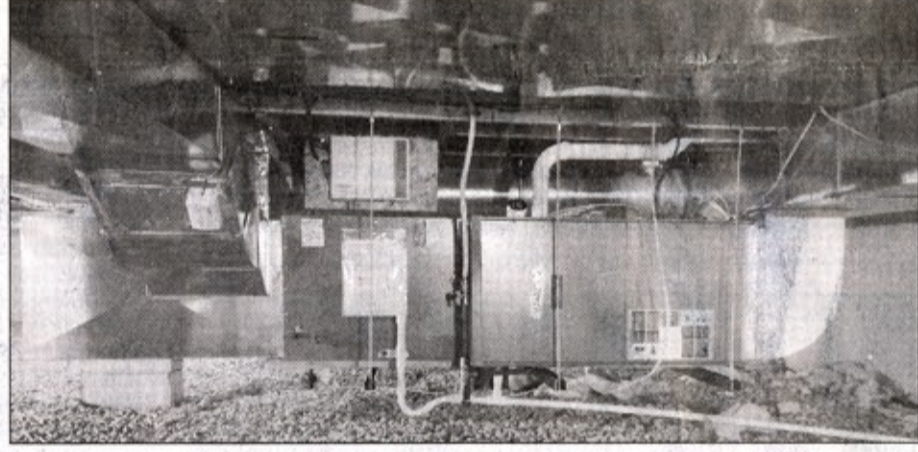
■ **WHERE:** Lyman Harbor, 1615 First St.

■ **INFO:** Contact Leslie Cantelli, Home Show coordinator, at 419-357-2311 or e-mail cantelli2@aol.com.

the first local builder designated a Certified Green Professional. According to the National Association of Home Builders, there are 44 others in Ohio.

Zimmerman Remodeling and Construction, based in Bellevue, has been using energy-efficient technologies for years, he said. That includes foam insulation, digital thermostats, high-efficiency furnaces and low-emissivity windows, which reduce heat transfer.

"A lot of these practices we've been



using, I just didn't call them 'green,'" Zimmerman said.

Another local company offering customers utilities savings is P2000 Insulation of Northwest Ohio in Castalia. P2000 is a mylar-backed foam insulation that can be installed under vinyl siding or in an attic, Operations Manager John

Weislock said. "The heat is going to stay in the house, and nothing can penetrate this," he said. "In the summertime, you're going to see substantial savings on the cooling bill because the heat will reflect back out."

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Register photo/LUKE WARK

Low-E argon-filled, thermal-paned windows help save energy by keeping heat in during cold weather as well as keep heat out during warm weather. The windows are one of the many products Zimmerman Remodeling and Construction Inc. has been using for years that are now considered "green" items to make a more energy efficient home.

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Insulation is key at the Lake View condos, where thick limestone walls are enhanced with foam insulation.

Other "green" features include eco-friendly paint, balconies made from recycled plastic and dimmable, high-efficiency light bulbs.

Krabill said "green" technologies and contractors who know how to work with them are available in north-central Ohio, but not widespread.

Home shows — like the one scheduled for next weekend at Lyman Harbor — are a good place to start, he said.

"I'm totally confident that there's going to be a lot of contractors talking about green building," Krabill said.

Both Zimmerman and Weislock said they plan to be there.

As for when eco-friendly construction will become mainstream, Zimmerman said that's still a few years down the road.

People in their 20s and 30s are interested in protecting the environment, but aren't necessarily willing to pay a premium for the technology, he said. It will be the people in high school now who will drive the boom.

"I believe they're going to demand that," he said. "I think we're looking at probably five years from now, that group's going to be in the market."

But Zimmerman said he couldn't predict what will be cutting-edge in green building by then.

"I think in five years," he said, "we're going to be using materials that aren't even invented today."