

waterwise

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Colorado's First EPA WaterSense Home Approved

By Frank Kinder, Colorado Springs Utilities

Colorado WaterWise recognizes GJ Gardner in building Colorado's First EPA WaterSense, LEED for Homes Gold, and EnergyStar Certified Home in Gold Hill Mesa, Colorado

GJ Gardner's new home in Gold Hill Mesa, Colorado Springs, recently qualified for three national certifications, including the WaterSense® label. Since teaming up with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) WaterSense program, GJ Gardner has completed the first labeled home in the state of Colorado and the first in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas! It is also Colorado Spring's first LEED certified home, and is also EnergyStar certified, scoring an astounding 13 on the Home Energy Rating Score (HERS) index! The best possible score would be 0, for a zero energy home. A new standard home would score approximately 100 on the HERS index.

Frank Kinder, Water Conservation Specialist with Colorado Springs Utilities and Colorado WaterWise Co-treasurer, assisted the builder and suppliers in design and specifications for WaterSense certification, which is only the 55th of its type in the country. The U.S. Green Building Council's Colorado Southern Branch members acted as project consultants, registered and interpreted building features through numerous tours and presentations, and facilitated the home's pursuit of LEED for Homes Gold. EnergyLogic was the provider and certified all three rating systems. The WaterSense Label acted as a Pilot Credit in Innovation and Design, and contributed to a substantial reduction in water use in the home.

WaterSense is a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, seeking to protect the future of our nation's water supply by offering people simple ways to use less water. For more information on WaterSense labeled homes, a full list of labeled products and WaterSense irrigation partners, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.

Each WaterSense labeled new home is independently inspected and certified by a third party to ensure EPA criteria are met for both water efficiency and performance. WaterSense labeled new homes are built to use 20 percent less water than a typical new home, inside and out, using WaterSense labeled plumbing products, water-efficient fixtures and landscaping design, and a hot water delivery system that reduces the amount of time and energy needed to provide warm water for bathing and cleaning while providing high performance, comfort, value, and savings.

"Owning a WaterSense labeled new home means you can enjoy all the comforts that one would expect of a new home while using less water, energy, and money," said Sheila Frace, Director

Each year, a family of four can reduce their water use by about 50,000 gallons—you would use that much water to shower for an entire decade!

“Owning a WaterSense labeled new home means you can enjoy all the comforts that one would expect of a new home while using less water, energy, and money.”

of the EPA Office of Water’s Municipal Support Division. “A family of four who invests in a WaterSense labeled model can save \$600 on utility costs every year and save water for future generations.” Each year, a family of four can reduce their water use by about 50,000 gallons—you would use that much water to shower for an entire decade! You can also save enough energy to power a refrigerator for up to two years.

“We applaud the innovative builders who are taking such a thoughtful approach to water. These sensible steps will not only save money for homeowners but provide important examples for Coloradans as we understand water is a treasure for the entire state, important for our homes, but also for our farmers, rivers, wildlife, industries and tourism,” said John Stulp, special policy advisor for water to Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper. “Such

responsible approaches to water helps our economy and environment thrive.”

The builder was already in framing when approached about LEED and WaterSense, so close coordination was necessary for product specs and design. Wayne Intermill, owner of GJ Gardner Homes Northgate, was challenged to achieve the certifications, and eager to understand the values they could provide to his home. The home was featured on the 2011 Parade of Homes, and won numerous awards in its category. Notable technologies include a photovoltaic array that provides 92% of energy needs, tight building envelope, and a geothermal hybrid heating system using three 365 foot deep wells, providing a comfortable, quiet, and efficient home. It has been a case study for presentations at the WaterSmart Innovations Conference, Colorado Sustainability Conference, and December’s EnergyStar Conference, and host to numerous tours and recognition events.

