



CYPRESS

Helps Florida Builder Achieve Green *VISION*

Cypress has always been a favored building product in the coastal communities of the south. But can it be a “green” product, too? The answer is “yes,” according to the designer and builder of *Green Builder* magazine’s 2008 VISION House.

Situated on the shore of Lake Apopka, just outside Orlando, the 5,550 square-foot residence was built to highlight just how beautiful, diverse and liveable a home can be when it is constructed to the National Association of Home Builders’ (NAHB) Model Green Building Guidelines.

Jim Rahman, co-founder of Westmost Green Homes, the official builder of the 2008 VISION House, said one way he supported

“The VISION House is arguably the most green home built in all of Lake County.”

– Jim Rahman, Westmost Green Homes

green building principles was to rely heavily on local building materials and products. Consequently, cypress, a wood widely available in the Sunshine State and throughout the southeastern U.S., figures prominently in the architectural details of the home, from the exposed trusses in its soaring main room to the paneled ceilings of its wide wraparound porch.

Rahman’s reasons for selecting cypress were simple. “It is a native, southern product that was sustainably sourced from a local plantation,” he explained. Having used the wood for years on

countless other projects, he is also familiar with cypress’s natural beauty, stability, and its ease of application. “It’s a beautiful product that can be left natural, if desired,” he said.

Along with the interior trusses and exterior ceiling, cypress also was used to line an outdoor shower and in the home’s dumbwaiter shaft.

In addition to using environmentally friendly building materials, Rahman also had to overcome an environmental challenge that builders commonly face in central Florida, where water



Exposed cypress trusses create a warm and inviting main room.



Native cypress distinctly panels the ceiling of the wraparound porch, complimenting the views of the lake.

conservation is a priority. For this reason, his VISION House encompasses a variety of water-saving features including low-flow shower heads, dual flush toilets, a waterless urinal and tank-less water heaters. There is also a closed aerobic wastewater treatment system that captures, stores, treats, and releases the home's wastewater safely underground to irrigate the landscape. Irrigation and water conservation is further aided by a 7,000-gallon tank that captures rainwater not just to nourish the lawn and plants, but to keep the swimming pool full, too. Together, Rahman estimates that these highlights enable the VISION House to capture and reuse up to 300,000 gallons of water per year.

Since it was unveiled at the 2008 International Builders Show, the VISION House has earned green certifications from the Florida Solar Energy Council, Florida Green Build Coalition, Institute for

Business and Home Safety, and the NAHB Green Building Program. Furthermore, the house is expected to be Florida Water Star-certified.

The *Green Builder®* VISION House Series is a sequence of showcase home projects produced by *Green Builder®* Media to demonstrate the benefits of sustainable design, construction, and product selection. These houses are being built across the country to coincide with industry events such as the International Builders' Show, the National Green Building Conference, and local/state Home Builder Association forays into the green building space, as well as other opportunities for educational outreach.

To learn more about cypress and the exceptional value, beauty and sustainability it can bring to a new or remodeled home, visit www.cypressinfo.org, a service of the Southern Cypress Manufacturers Association.



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