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Net-Zero Energy Home Coalition Announces 2009 Award Winners

TORONTO, June 8 /CNW/ - The Net-Zero Energy Home (NZEH) Coalition is pleased to announce the winners of the inaugural Net-Zero Energy Home Awards.

The reception was held on June 8 at the Westin Hotel located at 270 St. Antoine Ouest, in downtown Montreal.

Awards were given under four categories:

The Now House Project Inc.: The "closest to net-zero energy" retrofit project of the year;

Habitat Studio and Workshop Ltd: The "closest to net-zero energy" custom home builder of the year;

Abondance le Soleil; EcoCité Developments: The "closest to net-zero energy" production home builder of the year;

Derek Satnik of Mindscape Innovations Group Inc.: The Net-Zero Energy Home champion of the year

The awards recognize builders who are responding to a changing marketplace - one that is increasingly influenced by homeowner concerns for energy security, climate change and health.

About the Net-Zero Energy Home Coalition

Established in 2004 by a group of forward-looking homebuilders and developers, the Net-Zero Energy Home Coalition (<http://www.netzeroenergyhome.ca/>) promotes the benefits of more efficient use of zero or very low impact resources. Resulting in cleaner air and healthier homes for homeowners, net-zero energy homes also protect the climate and generate economic opportunities for the manufacturing of energy efficient technologies and onsite renewable energy generation in Canada's residential marketplace.

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The Inaugural NZEH Coalition Award Ceremony



(Left to Right) Peter Love, awarding Closest to Net-Zero Energy Retrofit of the Year, to Now House representative Steve Harjula, Gordon Shields, Executive Director, Net-Zero Energy

Mark Ginsberg, Senior Advisor, USA Department of Energy, awarding the Closest to Net-Zero Energy Custom Homebuilder Award to Habitat Studio & Workshop Ltd. representative, Trevor Hoover, Gordon Shields, Executive Director, Net-Zero Energy

Ron Lemaire, VP of Canada Green Building Council, awarding Closest to Net-Zero Energy Production Homebuilder of the Year to EcoCité Developments Alex Hill, Christopher Sweetnam-Holmes, Gordon Shields, Executive Director, Net-Zero Energy

During this summer's Montreal

Summit there was a little cross-programming, as well. Though it wasn't part of the official program, the inaugural NZEH Coalition awards ceremony was held on June 8, at the Montreal Westin Hotel. The judges were four "knowledgeable and distinguished" members of the green building industry; architect Richard Kadulski, reporter Tyler Hamilton, Chris Higgins from the CaGBC and Habitat for Humanity's Terry Petkau.

Amongst the winners were Derek Satnik of Mindscape Innovations Group, who was awarded The Net-Zero Energy Home Champion of the Year; the Now House Project Inc. was named the "closest to net-zero energy" Retrofit Project of the Year; Habitat Studio and Workshop Ltd was the "closest to net-zero energy" Custom Home Builder of the Year; and Abondance le Soleil -- EcoCité Developments, an EQUilibrium demonstration home, was the "closest to net-zero energy" Production Home Builder of the Year.

Satnik, the acknowledged champion of the year, said of the awards, "I laughed a little bit. I helped seed the concept for the awards in the beginning. But, I'm delighted and thankful for the award." His Kitchener-based firm, Mindscape Innovations, has been in business for just over three years, and he is looking to perhaps double the size of his firm, depending how business goes in the next little while. "Consulting, training and certifying, typically for energy efficiency;

most of what we do is residential," he says, listing his services.

Satnik feels like now is a good time for a firm like his. "Generally, across Canada, there is great interest in green building, but there's an enormous void of competent professionals," he says. "There are few people with confident, deployable answers." Other award winners:

- The Now House Project, another award winner, is an ambitious initiative which is attempting to retrofit older, circa-WWII homes into actual net zero energy homes. The first house, a 60-year-old, 1.5 story, 1200-square-foot home located in the Topham Park neighbourhood of Toronto, had retrofit work done on 14 different aspects of its design, from the basement floor to the roof.
- The Habitat Studio and Workshop is a 16-year-old green-committed, Edmonton-based custom home builder.
- EcoCité Developments is a Quebec-based developer of what they call EcoCondos and EcoLofts and other multi-unit structures, such as the Verdun Abondance le Soleil, a development of fully solar-powered condominium units.

Now that the ceremony is over, the coalition is already looking to its next awards. Starting next fall, potential nominees will be able to download and submit applications through the NZEH Coalition website (and also by regular mail). "I think there's real potential for this thing to grow," says Shields. **CIGBD**

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