

### Treasure Homes



### PROJECT

#### *Fallen Leaf at Riverbend - Sacramento, CA*

Built by Treasure Homes of Roseville, Fallen Leaf at Riverbend is a Zero Energy\* Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) community, and the first solar community to be built within the Sacramento city limits. In addition to solar power, the homes in this community include many other energy saving components as standard features and are located close to downtown, adding to Fallen Leaf's environmentally friendly stature by reducing the daily commute for its residents.

Fallen Leaf at Riverbend includes 32 Zero Energy homes, with four floor plans ranging in size from 1,026 to 2,271 square feet of living space. The community features private motor courts and professionally maintained landscaping, including the residents' front yards.

### MAKING THE DECISION

*Jim Bayless, president of Treasure Homes*, was intrigued by the idea that the homes he built could produce as much energy as they would consume. He decided to build a solar community after answering a few basic questions such as: How much will it cost? Who does the work? What's the warranty? How will my sub-contractors work together?

"These questions were answered to my satisfaction rather quickly by SMUD, Consol and BP Solar," comments Mr. Bayless. "And from there it was a natural step to add increased energy efficiency components and become a Zero Energy community and a certified California Green Builder."

There were no other solar communities in the market at the time, so Mr. Bayless decided to move forward and looked to solar as a point of differentiation for his community.

### CHALLENGE

According to Mr. Bayless, the solar technology wasn't an issue. The sub-contractors worked well together and he was confident in the warranties. His city inspections took longer than usual because staff was not yet experienced with solar permitting; however, being the first solar community in Sacramento, this was an understandable issue.

Mr. Bayless' biggest challenge was educating the consumer on the benefits of a Zero Energy community. "I underestimated the challenge in educating people about the benefits of solar," he notes. "Of course, we were the first out in the market and we were a very small infill community. *Since our debut, there has been a cultural shift in the awareness of the benefits of solar and energy efficient homes.* Now I simply can't turn on the TV or open the paper without hearing or reading something about solar. This has really helped us close out the community on a strong note."

\* Treasure Homes is part of the SMUD Zero Energy Home program. The program offers homes that feature the latest in energy efficient equipment, tighter building standards, and roof-integrated solar systems to generate electricity. The Zero Energy Home program formed the foundation for the New Solar Homes Partnership.

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"It was a wonderful experience and so satisfying to know that our goal for this community was achieved as evidenced by happy homeowners."

— Jim Bayless, President of Treasure Homes

### SOLUTION

Unlike the solar panels of 20 years ago, Treasure Homes utilized BP Solar's 175 Watt solar photovoltaic Integra, a module that directly mounted to the asphalt shingle roof, providing an aesthetically pleasing and virtually seamless design. The interior of the homes were beautifully merchandised to show that living in an energy efficient solar home would feel just like living in any other new home ... only better.

*Treasure Homes converted a model home garage into an energy efficient education room where potential home owners followed a path of "fallen leaves" to different displays showcasing the financial and environmental benefits of living in a Zero Energy home.* The space was bright, fun and informative. Visitors could even flush 17 golf balls down a toilet to show the dual flush throne's capabilities. Sales agents viewed the room as a valuable sales tool.

### PERFORMANCE RESULTS

*The average home owner's electric bills are 58 percent less than the average SMUD residential customer's electric bill.* The greatest savings has been a home owner with an 88 percent savings over the average SMUD customer. The electric bills at Fallen Leaf have ranged from a low of \$9.17 to a high of \$52.72. And at the first annual home owners association meeting—a meeting traditionally full of complaints—all of the home owners were giving testimonials of their energy savings.

### TREASURE HOMES

Based in Roseville, California, Treasure Homes is a privately held residential development and home building company established in 1999. The company's primary focus is on building homes for first-time buyers, and comfortable move-up homes throughout the greater Sacramento Area and surrounding Northern California communities. *Treasure Homes' objectives are to deal honestly and fairly with home buyers and suppliers, and build innovative homes at an outstanding value with lasting quality.*

### specifications

CITY: Sacramento, CA  
# OF SOLAR HOMES: 32  
SOLAR PROVIDER: BP Solar  
UTILITY: Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)  
AVERAGE SYSTEM SIZE: 2.45 kW  
ANNUAL ENERGY PRODUCTION: Estimated 3,000 kWh per home  
MODULE TYPE: BP Solar 175W solar photovoltaic Integra  
INVERTER: Xantrex GT 3.0 Series