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For Immediate Release
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NEWS

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Energy Trust launches pilot for Energy Performance Certificate *Tool for new, existing homes would quantify energy performance and carbon impact through comprehensive inspection techniques*

PORTLAND, Ore. — July 2, 2008 — Energy Trust of Oregon is piloting a study to determine how an energy-evaluation tool, called the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), could improve the overall efficiency of Oregon's new and existing homes and reduce the amount of carbon emissions homes contribute to global warming. Think of it as a "miles per gallon" sticker for a home.

The EPC shows a homeowner how his or her home's energy use compares to typical energy used in an older home, a new home built to meet the Oregon building code, and a home that is more efficient than code requires. The certificate also reports the home's carbon footprint, measuring the home's impact on the environment in terms of carbon dioxide emissions.

"Many weatherization and energy efficiency programs exist, but very few provide a standardized rating tool to show exactly how much is being wasted, how much can be saved," said Sean Penrith, executive director, Earth Advantage. "We hope the EPC can become an effective yardstick to drive Oregonians to improve the energy performance of their homes."

Beginning in July, new-construction homes earning the ENERGY STAR® or Earth Advantage Silver® certification will receive an EPC. For existing homes, the study will research how to keep the EPC and EPC process as low-cost and timely as possible.

Energy Trust is working with Earth Advantage's team of trained contractors to conduct the pilot. Energy Trust, which provides cash incentives to homeowners for energy upgrades, is underwriting the cost of the pilot study.

Homes contribute 21 percent of the total carbon emissions in the United States. "The EPC is a way to demonstrate to both homeowners and home buyers how they can save money and substantially reduce the carbon emissions from their home by investing in energy upgrades," said Steve Lacey, energy efficiency director, Energy Trust. "The EPC can be an innovative tool to move Oregon along the path to a more sustainable future."

Earth Advantage and Energy Trust will begin the pilot in July and will report the conclusions of the study by the end of 2008. After the results are evaluated, Energy Trust and Earth Advantage plan to establish a market-ready program in 2009.

Earth Advantage, Inc., a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, is a leading green building authority in the Pacific Northwest and the largest third-party tested program in the country. Earth Advantage homes are designed to use 15 percent less energy than houses built to standard code practices. Earth Advantage works with builders, developers and home owners to bring the most energy efficient, sustainable and healthy homes to the market. The organization has the ability to certify homes as Earth Advantage (Silver, Gold and Platinum levels exist too), ENERGY STAR, or LEED for Homes®. Over 9,500 homes in the state of Oregon have been certified to the Earth Advantage standard since 2000. For more information, visit www.earthadvantage.org.

Energy Trust of Oregon, Inc., is a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing how Oregonians use energy by promoting energy efficiency and clean renewable energy for Oregon customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas. For more information, visit the Energy Trust Web site, www.energytrust.org, or call 1-866-368-7878.

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