

# PERC Homebuilder Winners Focused on Quality

The 2008 winners of the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) Homebuilder Awards have been focused on two residential markets—older buyers and higher-end custom projects—that haven't experienced as much of a downturn as other home sectors in recent months. While the quality of the projects, the builders that were nominated, and their use of propane in their developments, were outstanding, the inclusion of several propane appliances in the described projects built by winners Wickiup Builders (Ennis, Mont.) and Dream Developers (East Hampton, Conn.) stood out.

Both builders and the propane marketers nominating them were invited by PERC to the International Builders' Show (IBS) in Orlando, Fla. in early February to receive their awards. PERC's senior vice president, Kate Caskin, was joined by Paula Wilson of AmeriGas (Valley Forge, Pa.), chairwoman of PERC's Consumer Education Advisory Committee, to introduce the winners.

Stephen Motto of Dream Developers was nominated by Dave DeTuccio Jr. of Bemers Petroleum (Glastonbury, Conn.) in the \$400,000 or more category for the firm's work on a project geared toward active adult homebuyers. The Laurel Ridge community will have 92 homes in East



The 2008 PERC Homebuilder Award winners, and representatives of the companies that nominated them, were invited to attend the International Builders' Show and Expo in Orlando, Fla. held in early February.

Hampton, Conn. when finished. All of the homes feature several propane appliances. (*BPN*, January, p. 22).

In the under \$400,000 category, Amanda Peterson of Northern Energy (Ennis) nominated Wickiup Builders for its custom home developments that feature energy efficient and high-end propane appliances. Wickiup Builders' owner, Tikker Jones, has been designated an Energy Star homebuilder.

Both builders and their projects have been included in case studies that are available on PERC's website, [www.propanecouncil.org](http://www.propanecouncil.org).

While home sales and builder starts currently are on the decline nationwide, the IBS still generated a huge crowd of more than 92,000 attendees and 1900 exhibitors in more than one million square feet at Orlando's huge convention center. Attendance was reportedly down about 11% from 2007's event, but the show's organizer reported that exhibitors were pleased with the turnout and interest from attendees. Interest was especially strong in the "green" product category, which included the products on display at the propane and natural gas industries' joint booth.

The booth included tankless water heaters, energy-efficient heaters and fireplaces, grills, and other appliances. PERC also heavily promoted propane's clean and efficient advantages with a contest to give away a new Roush Ford F-150 propane-powered truck. According to Tracy Burleson, PERC's director of residential trade outreach and partnerships, the promotion helped draw attention to propane's other uses than as a source of fuel in the backyard grill.

The 2009 IBS is moving back to Las Vegas, Jan. 20-23. Details on the show and the educational seminars can be found on the National Association of Home Builders' website, [www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org).



Paula Wilson of AmeriGas (left) helped Kate Caskin of PERC announce the winners of the 2008 Homebuilder Awards.