

Green home turns into golden opportunity at Red Oaks subdivision



J.E. KUYPER

ST. CHARLES - By itself, the size of the custom home under construction by Robert Lord Builders in the Red Oaks subdivision would be impressive.

After all, a lavish lifestyle promised inside the 15,000-square-foot single-family home on a 1.7-acre wooded lot includes marble floors, wooden beams, home theater, six fireplaces, tiled pool, two main floor verandas, two upstairs porches and views of a 15-acre lake.

But the builder, Robert Lord, 36, is touting another facet, largely unseen, as a big sales point for the home, which will be ready for occupancy by July.

Lord's creation might be the ultimate in green home construction in the Chicago area, if not the nation.

"Our goal was to craft an extremely spacious, intricately detailed dream home that would exceed everyone's expectations in terms of luxury and comfort as well as energy savings," Lord said. "As a result, we incorporated a variety of new, innovative green and renewable products and ultra-energy efficient systems. The combination, I believe, is uniquely resourceful and inventive."

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Rendering provided

When completed and ready for occupancy by July, the "green" home at Red Oaks subdivision in St. Charles will look like this. The home is currently under construction by Robert Lord Builders, a custom home-building company based in St. Charles.



Photo provided

The 161-foot long, "green" home is currently under construction by Robert Lord Builders in the Red Oaks subdivision of St. Charles. St. Charles.

Green home's tan exterior is fashioned in a French provincial style

• GREEN

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The home utilizes an underground geothermal heating and cooling system that provides a renewable fuel source to maximize energy efficiency.

A series of ground source geothermal heat pumps capitalize on the earth's constant temperature (approximately 55 degrees Fahrenheit) to heat and cool the home using water or an environmentally friendly antifreeze liquid circulated through a closed-loop pipe buried in the ground. The conditioned air is then distributed throughout the house via forced air blowers and traditional ductwork.

Lord has drilled seven 500-foot wells for geothermal use at his "green" house.

But that's only one part of the savings story. Here's another:

"This is also the world's first-known low-E house, thanks to our use of DuPont's Tyvek ThermaWrap and AtticWrap throughout the house, which achieves an energy savings up to 15 percent," he said.

The former helps keep radiant energy that accumulates in the wall sheathing from releasing to the exterior during the winter, and reflects radiant heat out of the wall via its metalized surface to cool the interior in the summer.

To boost energy efficiency even more, Lord employed closed-cell foam insulation, a spray-applied polyurethane foam that surrounds the home's building shell in a single blanket of air-tight insulation from the foundations, up the walls and across the roof.

Fashioned in a French provincial style, the tan stone exterior of the 3,000-square-foot two-story flaunts the facade of a castle with twin octagonal turrets that bookend the entryway.

Inside, a wide window vista across the foyer of a veranda is adjacent to the 40-by-16-foot swimming pool.

A right turn leads to the kitchen, equipped with Wolf appliances, a detailed mantle hood, maple cabinets topped with a creme glaze, granite countertops and marble flooring. The heart of the room is a wood-burning fireplace with a pot swing.

"This direct-vent, high-efficiency fireplace alone, which is linked to forced-air ductwork, can heat up to 3,000 square feet of living space in the home," said Lord. "It's one of six fireplaces found throughout the house."

• Master bath with a six-foot-tall, see-through waterfall, a six-foot by six-foot Jacuzzi and a three-step-up, 16-function control shower system.

• Two walkout porches on the second level directly over the veranda.

• Three bedrooms on the second floor, each with its own bathroom and loft space for play or storage accessible by a custom ship's ladder.

• Second-floor gallery room.

• Second floor, 1,000-square-foot suite with private entrance.

• Carport carriage area between a two-car garage and a second foyer, a rear-facing four-car garage with an extra storage area, and a bridge overlooking a small pond near the entryway.

"There are more unique angles in this home than in any I've ever seen," Lord said. "This residence is our masterpiece."