

NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 12, 2006

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Regional Multiple Listing Service forms soon to identify new homes with energy efficient & green certifications

**RMLS™ Board of Directors decision reflects importance of money-saving and sustainable
features to today's home builders, buyers and sellers**

PORTLAND, Ore. -- As rising energy costs and global warming concerns impel more consumers to make money-saving and green choices, home buyers in Oregon and Southwest Washington soon will be able to shop specifically for energy efficient and green home features.

Oregon's Regional Multiple Listing Service (RMLS™) Board of Directors recently agreed to expand its database to include information on energy efficient and green home features by spring of 2007, making this region one of the few in the nation where this service is available.

RMLS™ forms will soon include:

- Home performance and green home certifications such as ENERGY STAR®, Earth Advantage®, LEED For Homes® and others
- High-efficiency 90 AFUE furnaces
- ENERGY STAR appliances
- Source of electrical power, including specific utility service and solar features
- Additional home modifications, including sustainable materials, water filters, rain collectors and solar tubes

"Green and energy-efficient features have emerged as some of the most important and sought-after by buyers in our RMLS™ service area," said RMLS™ CEO Beth Murphy. "With the help of their REALTORS®, homebuyers now will be able to pinpoint homes with those features."

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Given the rising popularity and significant benefits of energy-efficient and green home features, these new RMLS™ capabilities will formalize the additional value these features bring to a home. In particular, potential buyers will be able to easily identify homes that incorporate a comprehensive suite of energy efficient and green features that are third-part certified to save energy, money and natural resources.

Everyone involved in real estate transactions will benefit from the RMLS™ additions, including home buyers, builders of new homes, sellers of existing homes, real estate agents and appraisers.

- Home buyers, 78 percent of whom say they would choose one home over another based on its energy efficiency, will be able to search for homes with lower energy costs and environmental impact. Four out of five of the same home buyers recognize the value of the ENERGY STAR label and 67 percent of them recognize the Earth Advantage brand.
- Home builders, nine of 10 saying they incorporate energy-saving products or features into new homes, will be able to differentiate themselves from the competition at a time when the market is cooling. According to a recent survey by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), 64 percent of home builders will either be heavily or moderately involved nationally in green building projects.
- Home sellers, who have invested money into energy-saving and sustainability features, can better promote their home's higher resale value.
- Real estate agents have new ways to better meet their clients' needs whether representing the buyer or seller. Seventy-five percent of those consumers that have used a realtor in the past confirmed that they would turn to a "green" realtor if there was a mechanism for searching and tracking homes built to energy efficient and green building measures.
- Appraisers will grow in their ability to incorporate energy efficient and green home features into a home's appraised value.

This decision from the RMLS™ Board of Directors came in response to a proposal spearheaded by Meadows Group, Inc.'s Kria Lacher, who is a certified EcoBroker and markets herself as "Portland's Green Realtor," and supported by a consortium of well known and trusted organizations, including ENERGY STAR Homes Northwest, Earth Advantage, Inc. and LEED for Homes. Lacher crafted a similar proposal last year, but it was not approved.

RMLS™ is the Multiple Listing Service for the Portland Metropolitan area and Lane, Douglas, Curry, Coos, Hood River and Wasco Counties in Oregon as well as Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties in Washington. Their mission is to provide REALTOR® members and the real estate industry with accurate and timely information and produce services that are cost effective, efficient and uniform. For more information, go to www.rmls.com.

ENERGY STAR Homes Northwest is a program administered by the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, a non-profit corporation supported by the Bonneville Power Administration, electric utilities, public benefits administrators, state governments, public interest groups and energy efficiency industry representatives. These entities work together to make affordable, energy-efficient products and services available in the marketplace. For more information, go to www.northwestenergystar.com.

Earth Advantage, Inc., a non-profit, is a leader in the sustainable building industry in the Pacific Northwest. Earth Advantage homes are designed for overall sustainability and use at least 15 percent less energy than houses built to standard code practices. The corporation offers a premier suite of residential green building programs – Earth Advantage, ENERGY STAR and LEED for Homes – which incorporate energy efficiency, indoor air quality and environmental responsibility measures. For more information, visit www.earthadvantage.org.

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The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System® is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council. The LEED for Homes program is a voluntary initiative promoting the transformation of the mainstream home building industry towards more sustainable practices. For more information, go to www.usgbc.org.

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