



# It's Easy Being Green

John's Islanders Bill and Daphne Howard chose an unconventional method to build a new home that left the power company scratching its head.

**W**hen homeowners Bill and Daphne Howard decided it was time to move closer to their children and grandchildren, they began their search the way most people do—by previewing structures that have already been built. What they found was a

bit disappointing. “We were downsizing, but when we looked at many of the homes with less square footage than our last house, the builders tended to put the same number of rooms in it. But with less space, you just had very small rooms. We still wanted a large open area to have friends

over and enjoy,” says Bill. So when they visited their daughter’s neighborhood and saw a newly built home just down the street, they were pleasantly surprised.

Structurally Insulated Panels (SIPs) weren’t something that Bill and Daphne



Story by Erin Forbes • Photography by Margaret Rambo



(above) Steve and Tina Bostic of Amerisips Homes with Homeowners Bill and Daphne Howard Displaying Their USGBC Lead Platinum Certification

(above left) Working with interior designer Eliza Linton, Bill and Daphne decorated in a classic style that is both welcoming and efficient. (top right) At first glance, it's not as obvious that this attractive exterior envelopes the Amerisips ABS Design Group's award-winning energy-efficiency. (bottom right) The kitchen features Energy Star appliances for minimal utility costs.

even knew existed until they saw the house that Amerisips Homes, a local green-building company, had just finished. Once they learned how they could build a custom home with the open floor plan and large rooms that they desired, they were sold.

Because most of the load-bearing walls in a home built with SIPs are in the ex-

terior walls and the floor, the floor plan doesn't require as many hallways or support beams. This allowed the homeowners to design the house almost any way they chose. "It just made good sense," Bill concludes, since they needed open space for all twenty-two family members during the holiday season. "It's so different from our last house," Daphne adds. "Amerisips's Ecoshell design is very



quiet. We just don't hear the street noise or much at all from outside." The lack of noise is aided by the thick supporting walls being cut to extremely exact measurements, which keep the joints tight and prevent unwanted air flow. The fully sealed envelope allows the heating and cooling units to turn on and off significantly less often, which is just one of the energy-saving benefits.

As they worked with Steve and Tina Bostic (the owners of Amerisips) for a design that was open yet comfortable, the couple learned more and more about how to be energy self-sufficient. For example, at first glance, it is easy to mistake the attic space as an average storage area with air ducts running this way and that. A closer look in an energy-efficient home, though, reveals the water heater, HVAC unit, and other important hoses secured inside a

sealed room that is temperature controlled just like every other part of the house, which leads to further energy savings.

Steve explains, "We build toward a goal of net-zero energy, which means that the house will generate almost as much power as it uses in the course of a year." This prompts a huge grin from Bill, who presents their most recent power bill sporting a negative dollar amount (25 for the month of November). "The power company owes us money this month," he laughs. Fortunately for the power company, Bill and Daphne are content to relax on their big back porch with coffee rather than collect on that bill. ❖

*For more information, call Amerisips Homes at (843) 352-2370, or visit [amerisips.com/easy-green](http://amerisips.com/easy-green).*

*(above left) Bill and Daphne often enjoy the view from this front porch or the lovely back porch. (above right, top and bottom) Colored tile accents tie in the contrasting scheme throughout the floor and shower areas.*

## VIDEO EXCLUSIVE

*Company: Amerisips Homes  
Project Type: New Construction  
Location: John's Island*

