

Utility costs? Fuhgeddaboutit!

'Net zero' house going on the market

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The home of the future is now for sale.

The award winning 984 square-foot, solar-powered "net zero" house designed and built by Purdue University students is on the market.

"When we started this project, our goal was also for a family to live in it," said McKenna Regan, a 2011 Purdue graduate who was involved in the more than two-year project. "It is a little bittersweet to know we won't be in it anymore, but I am looking forward to someone living here and others seeing how a house like this is possible."

Last year the house, known as INhome, took second place at U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon in Washington, D.C.

Purdue was invited to take part in the competition that began in 2009.

For 10 days last September the house was set up on the National Mall. Students cooked meals, watched television, washed laundry and left the lights on to show that solar energy could offset all the power needed for a family.

Now the two-bedroom, one-bath home is on a permanent foundation at 1300 Shenandoah Drive as part of the Chatham Square/Glen Acres neighborhood stabilization program.

The house will be listed Monday for about \$160,000. Purdue owns the home.

The INhome was built for an estimated \$243,000



The Purdue INhome is on a permanent foundation — for the first time — at 1300 Shenandoah Drive in Lafayette. (PHOTOS BY BRENT DRINKUT/JOURNAL & COURIER)



The kitchen and living room area of the INhome.

and contains state-of-the-art heating and cooling management systems.

Dozens of people toured it Saturday during an open house.

While George Kershner said the price was out of his range, he hopes the technology will become less expensive so others can adapt their homes to

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become more efficient.

"It is exciting to see what this house can do," he said. "A lot of people would like to know how much energy they use so they can make changes to save money."

Water will cost you

The house was built with the goal of being net zero.

That means all the energy needed to make the house livable must come from 36 240-watt solar panels on the roof.

Bill Hutzler, a Purdue professor and team adviser, said he hopes to prove that during the next few years.

As part of the sales agreement, Purdue will monitor the energy use of the home for five years.

This will continue the research into solar panels and energy systems in the home.

"You won't be paying any utilities at this house besides water," Hutzler said.

On Saturday the home was generating 3,419 kilowatt hours but using only about 600.

The excess power is sent back to Duke Energy and put on the grid for other customers. The home will be given credit for the returned power.

The home also features a 50-gallon hybrid electric water heater that uses ambient heat from air inside the house to heat water; a central control system that can be accessed by smartphone to turn off lights or change heat levels; and structural insulated panels.

Open houses are planned through the summer. A potential buyer would not be able to move in until the fall.