



Insulating Concrete Forms Installed *Overnight* for Extreme, “Green” Home

The challenge was to build an **ADA-designed, five-star Energy Star** rated green home with **Insulating Concrete Forms** in less than a week. It was an ambitious undertaking but the tradespeople, volunteers, and ICF forms were up to the task. **BuildBlock® Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs)** were literally installed *overnight* as the house superstructure for the “*Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*” project benefiting one very special family in Athens, Vermont. The finished home was presented to the Vitale family on September 12, 2007, and the family’s story and the construction project will be shown in a future episode of the popular ABC program.

“As far as we know this was the fastest ICF installation ever,” said BuildBlock’s Jason Fisher who served as the ICF technical advisor during the construction. “We started stacking forms just after night fall and completed pouring the concrete within the wall shortly after sunrise. This is far less than the usual installation time frame, but we accomplished it!” The challenging installation was led by volunteer tradespeople from **New Form Building Systems of Maine**. Owners Erica Libby and Michelle Atherton and a team of others made the trek to Vermont to contribute their much needed expertise.

Extraordinary measures were taken to accomplish the “extreme” project. Interior walls and siding were being installed at the same time forms were being stacked, and special high-strength concrete with accelerators was used so the trusses could be installed just a few hours after the pour. “The curing concrete was putting off so much heat it blistered the feet of the plumbers and HVAC crews that were working in the crawl space,” Fisher said. “Huge fans were brought in to cool the area for workers.” Fisher went on to say that as many as two concrete trucks were pouring their loads into the pump truck at a time with two more trucks waiting to off load right behind them. The extreme build is chronicled in photos on BuildBlock’s website at www.buildblock.com.

The McKernon Group of Brandon, Vermont, a BuildBlock Master Distributor, was selected to be the general contractor for the Vermont project. The McKernon Group has been building “green” for over two decades, so ICFs were a natural choice. According to Kevin Birchmore, McKernon Group’s Vice President, the use of insulating concrete forms on both the foundation and walls will **reduce heating cost by 35 percent**.

BuildBlock Building Systems donated the 800 ICFs used for the foundation and walls of the project. ICFs are hollow EPS foam blocks which are stacked into the shape of the exterior walls of a home or building, reinforced with steel rebar, and then filled with concrete. The EPS panels stay in place to provide permanent insulation. Combined with the concrete core, the ICFs result in a structure with remarkable energy efficiency, safety, strength, and noise reduction.

The 2,732 square foot **Energy Star qualified home** has received a **five-stars-plus rating**. In addition to BuildBlock ICF foundation and walls, the home includes state-of-the-art windows, low-flow shower heads, Vermont-grown lumber, “green” hardwood floors, Vermont slate, high efficiency gas fired

furnace and hot water heater, Energy Star appliances, and compact fluorescent light fixtures. Grid-tied photo cell solar panels on the roof will offset as much as \$400 from the annual electric cost.

The family for the Vermont project, which includes parents Lou and Sara Vitale and their two children, Kane who is 3-½ and Louie, Jr., who is almost 2, had been living in a former hunting camp. Louie, Jr., was born with several birth defects, including Arthrogryposis, club feet and skeletal dysphasia. He is on both a feeding tube and a breathing tube and is confined to a wheelchair. The new ADA-designed home will allow Louie to live in a safer, less restricted environment. More information about Louie's special needs can be found on the family's website at <http://louisangelo.tripod.com/>.

Each episode of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" is self-contained and features a race against time on a project that would ordinarily take at least five months to achieve. This involves a team of designers, contractors and several hundred workers and volunteers who will build an entire house, plus the interior and landscaping in just four days.

For more information about BuildBlock Insulating Concrete Forms and this special project, visit their website at www.buildblock.com.

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About BuildBlock Building Systems LLC

BuildBlock Building Systems LLC is the manufacturer of BuildBlock® Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs). Headquartered in Oklahoma City, BuildBlock serves North America through its manufacturing facilities in Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Utah, and Wisconsin.

About "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition"

"Extreme Makeover: Home Edition", which has won back to back Emmy awards as Best Reality Program (non-competitive), is entering its 5th season on ABC. The program is produced by Endemol USA, a division of Endemol Holding. Denise Cramsey is the executive producer; David Goldberg is the president of Endemol USA.