Abbeyfield Houses

Fort St. John, British Columbia, Canada

Fort St. John retirement home lowers operating costs with energy-efficient construction

When Ann Bergen and her husband Ben were searching for a way to contribute to quality seniors housing, they found what they were looking for in Abbeyfield Houses. Abbeyfield is a global nonprofit society devoted to making the lives of senior citizens more fulfilling. The Bergens had been volunteering with palliative care for several years when they took the next step and started the Abbeyfield Houses of Fort St. John.

Completed in 2008, the 12-unit home offers a unique balance between privacy, companionship, independence and security. When the board of directors started planning the home in 2006, they wanted to create a building that was environmentally responsible. That is why the Bergens chose the Advantage Insulating Concrete Form (ICF) System® for the foundation and above-grade walls. With a continuous layer of expanded polystyrene (EPS) insulation, the Advantage ICF System can cut energy consumption by 30 percent or more.

"We were quite concerned with building an environmentally friendly and energy-efficient home," said Ann Bergen, who serves as the current Vice President of Abbeyfield Houses of Fort St. John. "We are certainly very happy with our low utility bills."

Adding to the energy-saving benefits of ICF construction are full triple-pane windows and a geothermal heat pump.

Abbeyfield's residents greatly appreciate the improved comfort of the ICF building envelope. The solid concrete walls significantly reduce sound transmission and the airtight construction eliminates drafts and cold spots.

"There are no drafts, it is warm in the winter and cool in the summer—it has really worked great for us," said Bergen. "We're proud of what we've accomplished and it seems to be accomplishing the needs of our seniors."

"This is a great example of how the long-term cost savings of ICFs benefit building operators," said Doug Dyck, the Plasti-Fab Representative who provided support on the project. "In this case, we were able to help create a more comfortable environment for the occupants and cut energy costs."

ADVANTAGE ICF SYSTEM®

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