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NEWS RELEASE

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Habitat for Humanity constructs first house using EPB Zero Energy Resource Guide **Joins with green|spaces in announcing first-year energy savings**

Chattanooga, TN (July 27, 2021) – EPB of Chattanooga, Habitat for Humanity and green|spaces have partnered to develop a very cost-effective way to build highly energy-efficient homes that also provide health and environmental benefits. With the participation of home-buyer Tempestt Jordan, the partners worked together to pilot the new home-building guideline through the construction of a Habitat for Humanity House and measure the results.

After monitoring the home's energy consumption during the first year of occupation, the partners found Ms. Jordan saved more than \$500 a year compared to the average residential monthly bill in the EPB service territory. The [EPB Zero Energy Resource Guide](#) is now available free of charge for all homebuilders in the EPB service area and the EPB Energy ProsSM are available to provide free consultations in following the guidelines to achieve optimal results for homebuyers.

Homebuyers interested in further enhancing the environmental sustainability have the opportunity to achieve full "Zero Energy" status for their home by using EPB Solar Share to offset their energy use at a cost of \$5 per panel, per month.

"I'm honored to be the first homeowner to live in an EPB Zero Energy home," said Ms. Jordan. "I've seen substantial savings on my energy bills, and my new home has such better air quality, my family is having fewer allergy problems."

"The home was constructed with health and cost in mind," said Habitat for Humanity CEO Jens Christensen. "This pilot home is more energy efficient and better for the environment. We're currently in the process of working with EPB to build a second EPB Zero Energy house with another Habitat for Humanity homeowner, and we plan to build many more."

"This initiative is a great example of Chattanooga's long-standing commitment to smart sustainability," said Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly. "This program is particularly important because it opens up a new path for sustainable growth and improves our environment while also helping homeowners save money."

The EPB Zero Energy Resource Guide is a list of measures that can be implemented to save energy and money. The guide provides an easy checklist of products and building practices that are proven to make homes more energy efficient and increase comfort and health.

“This is a very timely effort as we’ve seen a dramatic increase in the number of homes being built in Hamilton County,” said Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger. “Consumers are more interested today than ever before in energy efficiency and greener homes and products, and the new EPB Zero Energy Resource Guide represents an affordable way for people to align their homebuying with their values.”

The EPB Zero Energy Resource Guide includes recommendations for building practices, insulation techniques and products, HVAC standards, and indoor air quality considerations, which will give homeowners a safer, healthier, less costly, lower maintenance home over the life of the house.

“As part of our mission to serve our whole community, we’re focused on providing our customers with expertise on affordable ways of enhancing energy efficiency, sustainability, and health so that more of our customers can benefit,” said EPB President & CEO David Wade.

Qualified contractors can also receive a new 2021 energy efficiency tax credit verification. Builders can get a one-time federal tax credit up to \$2,000 if they meet the 50% energy efficiency standard.

green|spaces, Chattanooga’s Sustainability Nonprofit, helped EPB develop the guide after the success of their NextGen Homes, a demonstration development of four homes completed in 2018 that explored how to build homes that can produce as much energy as they consume with a market-rate budget. After the NextGen Homes, green|spaces wanted to focus on affordable housing.

“We learned so much from our successful NextGen homes project, and we were thrilled to help EPB create this guide to explain practical and affordable strategies to make homes healthier and more efficient,” said green|spaces Executive Director Michael Walton. “This home is even more proof that green building should be available to all – regardless of income level.” green|spaces works with developers, architects, contractors, businesses, and communities to explore sustainability options that make sense for their project or neighborhood.

EPB Energy Pros can work with homebuilders to register for and implement the U.S. E.P.A. Indoor Air Plus certification as well. This certification ensures that a home is built to avoid common issues like water intrusion, dust, and particulate matter that negatively impact health and air quality.

Both contractors and residential customers who are planning to build homes who would like more information can contact our EPB Energy Pros by calling 423-648-1372 to set up a free consultation in person or by phone. There is more info available at www.epb.com/energypros as well.

About EPB

EPB serves the greater Chattanooga area by providing world-class energy and connectivity solutions as a means of promoting economic development and enhancing quality of life for our community. We deliver electricity to more than 170,000 homes and businesses across our 600 square mile service area which includes most of Hamilton County as well as parts of surrounding counties in both Tennessee and Georgia. In 2010, EPB Fiber Optics, which offers internet, TV, and telephone services, became the first provider in the United States to deliver up to 1 Gig (1,000 Mbps) internet speeds utilizing a community-wide fiber optic network which is accessible to every home and business in its service area. In 2015, EPB became the first, and to date, only American ISP to make up to 10 Gig (10,000 Mbps) internet speeds accessible to all of its residential and commercial customers as a standard offer.

EPB has also utilized its community-wide fiber optic network to deploy the most advanced and highly automated smart grid power management system in the nation. In recognition of EPB's groundbreaking infrastructure, the Department of Energy and Oak Ridge National Laboratory are utilizing EPB's smart grid as a national model for researching and developing best practices. EPB is also the first major power distribution utility to earn the USGBC's PEER certification for having a highly automated, modernized electric power grid.

EPB is an independent board of the City of Chattanooga which began serving customers in 1939. Visit EPB.com for more information.

About Habitat for Humanity of Greater Chattanooga Area

At work in Chattanooga since 1986, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Chattanooga Area is a faith based non-profit organization whose vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Dedicated to transforming the Chattanooga area by working with corporate partners, foundations, churches and thousands of volunteers to build simple, decent and affordable homes in partnership with low income families Chattanooga Habitat has built 277 homes providing more than 1,000 women, men, and children with the joy and security of Habitat Homeownership. Dozens more families have benefitted by Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization work which includes home repair and weatherization. Habitat Chattanooga builds more than just homes— we build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter.

About green|spaces:

green|spaces is an award-winning nonprofit dedicated to advancing the sustainability of living, working, and building in the Chattanooga region. Their diverse programming leads businesses and individuals through simple, practical, and affordable steps to improve outcomes for the planet, people, and the local economy, working upstream from challenges to help solve multiple problems simultaneously. Their Empower program has helped over 3,000 low-income families reduce their energy bills, Build it Green connects at-risk young adults with opportunities in sustainable development, the Green Prix provides kits for elementary, middle, and high schools to build and race their own electric cars, green|light is Chattanooga's green business certification (which EPB has achieved) and green|leader is a professional certificate offered through University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to learn how to become a sustainability leader. They do all this and more with support from the community, businesses, and partners like EPB and Habitat. Visit greenspaceschattanooga.org for more information or call 423-648-0963.

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