



Newport Partners L.L.C.

Newport Partners to Lead Study to Improve Systems Interactions in Housing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Davidsonville, MD – Newport Partners LLC has been chosen by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to investigate ways to improve systems interactions in houses. The study is funded through the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH) program administered by HUD.

Every house is composed of major structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and thermal envelope systems. Interactions between these systems can lead to inefficiencies and potential durability problems. One example of systems interactions is the effect of thermal envelope efficiency on the sizing of mechanical equipment. On the positive side, tightening the building envelope can allow a builder to reduce the size of mechanical systems. Upgrades in the thermal envelope can be paid for with savings in downsized mechanical equipment. The result for the consumer is lower utility bills and less humidity in cooling mode. On the negative side, concern has been expressed that if a house is made too tight, then indoor air quality and moisture problems can result. This can lead to mold, mildew, and in some cases rot.

Newport Partners LLC will work with the Center for Housing Research at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA to identify the major systems interactions in homes that affect comfort, health, safety, maintenance and repairs, and utility costs. The research will identify key systems interactions that negatively or positively affect any of these factors. The team will explore guidelines for optimizing the whole system and communicate results to the building industry. The team will lay out the subsystem performance characteristics and measures (e.g., air quality and thermodynamic formulas against human performance needs expressed in terms of comfort, energy use, etc.). This will result in a framework – a “whole house” calculator – that will determine the whole house systems’ performance given specific subsystem and human performance needs.

Mark Nowak, who is leading the project for Newport Partners, said, “The results of this study promise to improve our homes by bringing a comprehensive design approach to what has historically been a fragmented process.”

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About the PATH Program

HUD is sponsoring this work through the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH), a major public-private partnership focusing on improving the quality, performance, and value of housing. The project arises from PATH's technology roadmapping process for identifying next-generation technologies that meet the needs of the residential housing industry. More information on PATH and the technology roadmapping process can be found at http://www.newportpartnersllc.com/path_RM.html.

About Newport Partners LLC

Newport Partners LLC is a full service building technology consulting firm located in Davidsonville, Maryland. Organized as a women-owned small business, Newport Partners providing a full range of professional consulting, analytical, and technical services to the building industry. These services include strategic planning and market analysis; technology scanning and evaluation; product development, field testing and evaluation; training and education for the building industry; code development, evaluation and consulting; market research and industry outreach; and survey development and administration.

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