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MERITAGE HOMES OPENS SIX NEW ENERGY EFFICIENT COMMUNITIES IN FLORIDA

New High-Performance Communities Offer Energy Saving Features That Can Decrease Monthly Utility Usage by Up to 67%

ORLANDO, Fla., Feb. 10, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Meritage Homes Corporation (NYSE:MTH), a top-10 U.S. homebuilder, is proud to announce they are offering their new energy saving homes in seven communities around the Orlando, Florida metropolitan area. This announcement comes on the heels of the company launching their first high-performance community, Lake Todd Estates located in Apopka, Florida, on January 27th. The newest communities to offer these new green homes include Forestbrooke in Ocoee, Cypress Preserve in St. Cloud, Preserve at Black Hammock, Terralago in Oviedo and Oaks at Brandy Lake and Independence in Winter Garden. These new high-performance homes can save homebuyers over 65% in energy use as compared to existing homes, according to standards set by the U.S. Department of Energy. All the energy saving features will be included in each home as standard elements, with no additional cost to the homebuyer.

Meritage Homes was the first national homebuilder to exceed the EPA's ENERGY STAR® qualification requirements in every home the Company has built since January 1, 2010. All Meritage homes are at least 20% to 30% more energy efficient than a typical home built to the current International Residential Code. Meritage subsequently launched their next generation of advanced energy saving homes in the Arizona market last June, which go well beyond ENERGY STAR standards to save 40-80% or more in energy consumption.

Meritage Homes energy saving homes were designed from the ground up to go well beyond the standard energy performance program of any other production homebuilder's community in the Orlando area. Each new Meritage Green Home comes with all of the following advanced building science practices, including:

Spray Foam Insulation

Double Low-E Vinyl Windows

Energy Efficient CFL Lighting

Weather Sensing Irrigation

High Performance Water Saving Plumbing Fixtures

15 Seer Air Conditioning Unit

"We are very happy to be able to offer our energy saving homes in seven Meritage Homes communities across the Orlando metropolitan area. These new high performance homes will offer some of the most advanced energy efficient features available today," said Fred Vandercook, Orlando DP for Meritage Homes. "We continually strive to provide our buyers with homes that offer unequalled energy savings and versatile home designs, built to the highest level of craftsmanship. We are offering these high performance homes at some of our most desirable communities in the Orlando area. All communities offer homebuyers numerous amenities and a quiet respite from bustling downtown Orlando, but are just minutes away from great dining, entertainment and retail options. These high-performance, energy saving homes will not only save our homeowners money on their monthly utility bills, but will reduce energy consumption and save scarce resources for future generations."

With so many different floor plans to choose from in these seven communities, just about anyone can find a home to fit their individual needs and lifestyles. Whether it's a single or newly married first time homebuyer, growing families, those needing room for extended family or empty nesters, these communities offer versatile one and two-story homes at a wide range of sizes and price points.

"We believe this is the way homes should be built going forward. They are not only more energy efficient, but more comfortable, cleaner and safer for our homeowners than other new or existing homes," said Steve Hilton, chairman and chief executive officer of Meritage Homes. "Meritage Homes is a leader in energy efficient homebuilding, and this is a key component of our strategy. We are committed to advancing green building practices throughout the industry."

Since Lake Todd in Apopka opened the last week of January, the company has seen a huge number of potential homebuyers through their doors and several home sales. Community visitors have also come out to see the unique, deconstructed learning center, which showcases many of the energy saving features incorporated in each new Meritage home through a series of hands-on displays.

About Meritage Homes Corporation

Meritage Homes Corporation is the 9th largest homebuilder in the U.S. based on homes closed. Meritage offers a variety of homes across the Southern and Western states designed to appeal to a wide range of home buyers, including first-time, move-up, luxury and active adult buyers, with base prices starting from under \$100,000. As of December 31, 2010, the Company had 151 actively selling communities in 12 metropolitan areas including Houston, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Austin, San Antonio, Phoenix/Scottsdale, Tucson, Las Vegas, Denver, Orlando, and the East Bay/Central Valley and Inland Empire of California.

In 2010, Meritage celebrated its 25th Anniversary, launched a new Simply Smart Series™ of homes and a 99-day guaranteed completion program in certain communities, and is the only large national homebuilder to be 100% ENERGY STAR® qualified in every home started since January 1, 2010. Meritage has designed and built nearly 70,000 homes in its 25-year history, and has a reputation for its distinctive style, quality construction and positive customer experience. To find a Meritage community near you, go to www.meritagehomes.com.

The Meritage Homes Corporation logo is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=2624>

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