



PEMBROKE

Builder trains for Solar Decathlon

By [Melanie Plenda](#) / [For the Monitor](#)

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A Pembroke modular home builder is taking its energy efficient homes on the road. Epoch Homes, in collaboration with the Massachusetts College of Art and Design Department of Architecture and the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, will compete as Team Massachusetts in the Solar Decathlon 4D Home completion.

The Solar Decathlon, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, is a competition to come up with a home that is the best combination of energy-efficient construction, comfort and affordability. Twenty teams from around the world will assemble their houses on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., between Sept. 23 and Oct. 2.

The goal, said Epoch CEO John Ela, is to design and build a home that not only uses no energy but also gives back to the grid. To do that, the sun will power the 1,000-square-foot home. The house will also be outfitted with super-insulated walls and windows, Ela said, making it virtually air-tight. Another unique feature of the house is the flexible floor plan with movable interior walls, he said. This feature allows the home to grow and change with the family.

Ela said the team finished the house in about three weeks. When the competition is over, the home will go to a family in Maine.