



Spring Issue: A Variety of Modular Solutions to Building Green

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Epoch Homes (Pembroke, NH) is one modular home manufacturer that has gotten into the green home building business in the Northeast in a big way. Recently, architect John Rossi and partner Quincy Vale, owners of Powerhouse Enterprises, saw a need for a quick, green solution for a small office, weekend home, starter-house or bachelor pad. They created the PowerPod, a self-contained modular green building with about 500



sq.ft. of living space.

“There are a lot of different views right now on what green means. We try to respond to what the customer wants and give as much guidance as we can,” says John Ela, CEO of Epoch Homes. He argues that this approach is more effective at introducing green building to the mainstream market than the practice of offering specific green home models or features.

According to Ela, many firms making green modular housing offer only a few models with several customizable options. “Homeowners want more options than that,” he says.

Units come stripped down or tricked-out for a more complete living experience, and the whole deal ships complete and can be installed in one day. Roof designs depend on location and use. Decks, bathrooms and kitchens come in a variety of configurations and options, or you can do the interior build-out and finishing yourself.



PowerPods feature options such as:

- Active solar array
- Remote building monitoring system
- High-efficiency lighting and water use
- Heavy insulation and airtight exterior
- Radiant floor heating
- Solar windows
- Rainwater collection scupper
- Optional composting septic and grey water technology

The company recently signed on its first customer, The Yellow Barn Music School, which will be using eight PowerPods for its music lessons. Yellow Barn Music School and Festival was founded in 1969 by cellist David Wells, then chair of the Chamber Music Department at the Manhattan School of Music, and his wife, pianist Janet Wells. Yellow Barn students include many of the finest up-and-coming young professional musicians currently studying at, or recently graduated from, Juilliard, the New England Conservatory, the Curtis Institute, the Cleveland Institute of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory, Peabody, Yale, and other leading conservatories and schools of music.

PowerPod's solar butterfly roof generates electricity, hot water—and compliments. This configuration allows windows to be placed up to 10' high, bringing in lots of warm southern sun in wintertime. Conversely, the roof's sizeable overhangs keep things cool in summer. Other advantages: high ceilings without excessive volume, lovely northern light and a center trough that's ideal for rainwater collection. Finally, the butterfly's asymmetrical pitch makes the solar collection system almost invisible from ground level.