

# MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Energy testing for the future

### NEW HOMES TO TEST ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The UTAS School of Architecture is testing the science behind the 'energy efficient' homes of the future.

Three new 'test homes' are being built in the Hobart suburb of Kingston as part of the Five- Star Thermal Performance Project at the University of Tasmania.

The project was officially launched today by Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, and Deputy Premier and Minister for Planning the Hon. Steve Kons. The houses are being built in association with prominent Hobart building company, Wilson Homes.

The project's leader, Associate Professor Greg Nolan from the Timber Research Unit in the UTAS School of Architecture, said each house would relay a range of information back to architecture labs.

"Each monitored house will contain an extensive sensor array recording temperature, humidity, air movement, solar radiation and electricity use. The houses will be monitored empty (in a free-running state) for three months in winter and for a further 18 months occupied," he said.

"This information gathered will be used to assess the accuracy of methods used to determine the 'energy efficiency' of Australia's housing. This includes the evaluation of the CSIRO's AccuRate thermal performance modelling program, a key thermal calculation method for the Building Code of Australia."

"National building regulations now include thermal performance requirements aimed at reducing the amount of energy used for heating and cooling our homes. The 5 Star Thermal Performance Project will provide data to confirm the thermal performance."

Wilson Homes and the Wilson Family Trust have agreed to modify the arrangement of three houses to suit the requirements of the project and to make these houses available for three months monitoring empty in winter 2007. Completion is due in June, 2007.

Associate Professor Nolan said the houses were an amazing community collaboration.

"This project is indebted to Wilson Homes and the generosity of local contractors. It is an example of what a community can achieve when research and industry come together in partnership.

The project also receives funding from the Forest and Wood products Research and Development Corporation and the Tasmanian State Government.

### **For more information/interviews contact:**

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