

**Home Magazine**  
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'The program sets out to demystify the meaning of sustainable housing'

A GOOD home is comfortable, safe, affordable, easy to maintain and conscious of its surroundings.

Obvious? You'd think so.

But sadly, this is not the case.

Too many houses today are energy-guzzling, land-hogging disasters that are costly to run and spare no thought for landscape, neighbours or future needs.

In a move aimed at addressing the crucial need for responsible housing, the Queensland Government, local councils and private industry have launched the **Sustainable Homes** program.

It's a breath of fresh air.

Construction is already under way on the first of a series of public display homes throughout Queensland.

**Sustainable Homes** program director, architect Wayne Petrie says sustainable housing is simply about good design.

"A **sustainable home** looks like a normal house but it is more responsive to the local climate making it more comfortable to live in, more responsive to people's needs now and into the future, as well as improving security and lowering ongoing maintenance costs," he says.

"Using 21st century know-how and technology, the program sets out to demystify the meaning of sustainable housing."

Each of the estimated 34 houses to be built across the state will be open for inspection for a minimum of six months.

The first houses - at Seventeen Mile Rocks, Brisbane; 'Zilzie', near Emu Park on the Capricorn Coast, and Toowoomba, west of Brisbane - will be joined by others in areas including Noosa, the Gold Coast, Cairns, Townsville and Caboolture.

Some will be part of residential estates such as **Sustainable Home** Zilzie which is being built in Seaspray, a \$150 million masterplanned community.

The **Sustainable Home** Brisbane is part of the eco-friendly Verandah housing estate at Seventeen Mile Rocks, on the city's westside.

Some of the houses will be single storey, others two storeys. Features will include solar power, rainwater tanks, energy-efficient lighting and designs that blend with their surroundings.

10 tips for sustainable housing:

1. Natural heating and cooling - use the climate to keep your house at a comfortable temperature. Consider orientation (which rooms get the most sun, put living rooms on the northern side), ventilation, insulation and shading - the principles of passive design.
2. Efficient water heating - solar hot water, natural gas or an electric heat pump will lower your heating bill and help the environment.
3. Future proof - living areas and at least one bedroom and toilet on the entry level should be readily accessible from the front boundary or car, to accommodate your changing needs.
4. Safe floors - design floors and the showers to be step-free and use surfaces that are slip-resistant and easy to clean.
5. Reduce water usage - use water-efficient appliances, fittings and landscaping, and consider water tanks to collect water for gardens and flushing toilets.
6. Address the street - the home should have a house number at the front which is easy to read, good external lighting and well-defined driveway and entries.
7. Casual surveillance - design your home to have easy surveillance of play areas for safety and surveillance of the street from the main living area for security.
8. Long term maintenance - reduce the repair and ongoing costs of your home by using low-maintenance materials.
9. Indoor air quality - avoid materials that contain volatile organic compounds which can impact on your health by causing irritation and allergies.
10. Outdoor living - consider permanently covered play and entertainment areas with a good relationship to indoor spaces.

WANT MORE? For information on the **Sustainable Homes** program: [www.sustainable-homes.org.au](http://www.sustainable-homes.org.au)  
Australian Green Development Forum: [www.agdf@agdf.org.au](mailto:www.agdf@agdf.org.au)

**Caption:** Cool: these illustrations of Sustainable Home Brisbane, above, and Sustainable Home Zilzie, left, are examples of sustainable and comfortable living

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