

AWCI's

CONSTRUCTION DIMENSIONS

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THEY SAY EVERYTHING IS BIGGER IN TEXAS, but in some cases bigger isn't necessarily better. Electricity bills in Texas are big - really big, thanks to punishing summers that seem to last forever and consecutive 100 degree plus days that can last well into September. Utility costs can easily run more than \$500 per month in the summer months. FutureStone, the Texas distributor of NUDURA Insulated Concrete Form (ICF) building technology, is bringing welcome relief to Texas in the form of lowered utility costs, plus other building advantages that seem tailor made for the Texas market.

In Texas, 12 million BTUs of electricity are consumed per household for air conditioning. One third of all the electricity used by Texas residential customers is for air conditioning—that is almost three times the national average.

ICF building technology is widely used in Europe and is taking off in Canada and the United States as builders look to meet the needs of a demanding market that wants comfort without compromise and protection from the elements of wind and fire in a beautiful, luxurious affordable package.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE ICFs?

ICFs are hollow blocks made of expanded polystyrene (foam). The forms are snapped together like LEGO® blocks, stabilized with rebar and filled with concrete - making super insulated, strong exterior walls for both residential and commercial properties. After the concrete is



TEXAS ICF DISTRIBUTOR

THINKS **BIG** AND
BUILDS
BIGGER

BY CAMERON WARE

poured, they become a permanent part of the wall assembly as well as adding a 2-inch thick layer of foam insulation to each side of the wall.

The walls are fire, earth quake and termite resistant, and the layers of foam insulation provide excellent sound-proofing as well as backing for drywall on the inside and stucco, lap siding or brick on the outside.

According to the Insulating Concrete Form Association, energy savings and comfort are built into every ICF system. ICFs have a high R-value, and air infiltration in an ICF home is minimal because of the continuous air barriers provided by the foam insulation and the concrete. In addition, the concrete walls of an ICF home have high thermal mass, which reduces both peak and total heating and cooling loads. The combination of these three factors is believed to account for between 25 percent and 50 percent energy savings of ICF versus wood or steel-framed homes.

EVIDENCE IS IN TEXAS

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In Texas, 12 million BTU's of electricity are consumed per household for air conditioning. One third of all the electricity used by Texas residential customers is for air conditioning - that is almost three times the national average, according to Texas Environmental Profiles, a Joint Project of Environmental Defense and The Texas Center of Policy Studies.

“Texans are demanding - they want the best in quality and comfort, but just as important is the beauty and styling of their homes. Our homes offer the best of both worlds. We are

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building gorgeous Spanish style homes, striking coastal retreats, and stunning brick beauties - all with superior insulation and energy efficiency,” said Randy McGuffee, vice president of sales and marketing for FutureStone.

Jack Farr owner of a “sports car country club,” The Villas of MotorSport Ranch, chose NUDURA to build his 82-lot trackside development in Cresson, Texas.

“Our homes are no ordinary homes. Our clients demand the best - they want beautiful homes with all the trimmings, plus they need the homes to meet the high performance demands that will be put on them. NUDURA makes it easy for us to deliver on the promise of 'high performance' living. These homes exceed our expectations in terms of quality, sound resistance, fire resistance, durability, energy efficiency, and comfort.”

Now, with ICFs, when Texans say they are living large, they aren't referring to their utility bill.

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For More Information

To find out more about FutureStone and ICFs, contact the author of this article at cameron.ware@futurestone.com or call 817.377.9215.