

## Tours of the ultimate green home

By Rachael Rees / *The Bulletin*

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Editor's note: Tom Elliott and Barbara Scott invited The Bulletin to follow their efforts to build the ultimate green home in Bend, to document the project from start to finish.

As the rain poured down Wednesday morning, seven members of the Clean Energy Service Corps huddled together on Northwest Shasta Place to learn about Desert Rain, Tom Elliott and Barbara Scott's ultimate green home.

"What we call this house is LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) on steroids," Scott said, as they stood in the former garage of the original house. "The world is watching us. There's only three structures, commercial structures, that have achieved the Living Building Challenge."

And if Desert Rain succeeds, Scott explained, the project will be one of the first homes in the world to meet the challenge, a set of green building standards designed to be the most advanced possible.

The Clean Energy Service Corps, a six-month employment program through Bend Area Habitat for Humanity and Heart of Oregon Corps, is one of 18 groups that have toured the property since December 2011.

Members of the Clean Energy Service Corps help make homes more energy efficient, said Blake Butcher, a corps member who wants to work in the green construction industry.

"You don't see a lot of houses that are built like this," the 22-year-old Bend resident said. "I didn't know that you could use all the reclaimed wood. I didn't know that you could go tear down a barn, pull out the nails, refinish the wood and put it back into a house."

For Scott and Elliott, the tours are part of the ongoing mission to educate school groups, builders, homeowners and others about the sustainable practices used in Desert Rain.



Photos by Andy Tullis / The Bulletin

Barbara Scott, third from right, talks to students and staff during a tour Wednesday of Desert Rain, her and her husband's home under construction in Bend. Their goal is for the home to be among the first to achieve the Living Building Challenge, an advanced standard for green buildings.



"It's like putting that little drop of water in a big pond and having it spread," Scott said. "It's very rewarding to see the response from those that tour. Even those kids, they were like, 'wow this is so cool.' People are curious; they want to see what this is and hear the story of how we've gotten to where we've gotten with it."

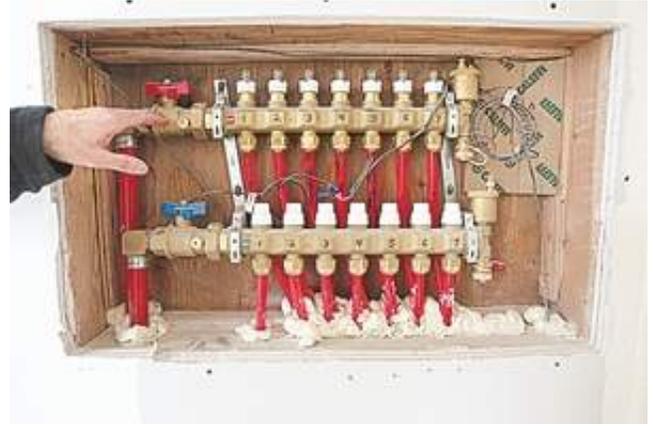
To help the group understand, Elliott described some of the strict criteria required for Desert Rain, including using locally-sourced materials, producing its own energy and using only captured rain and snow melt for water needs.

And as they made their way to the main house, the couple shared details of construction and stories about their journey, both their successes and struggles.

"This is a demonstration project," Scott said during the tour. "It's not something we think everybody in Bend should do. It's been outrageously challenging because it's new territory."

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Andy Tullis / The Bulletin

Tom Elliott points out a heat manifold for hot and cold water for the in-floor radiant heat during a tour Wednesday.

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