
Press Release

19 April 2013

Cost-effective energy revolution with Passive House

International conference for sustainable buildings in Frankfurt

Frankfurt, Germany. The energy revolution is well on its way, and Passive House offers a viable and cost-effective solution for the building sector. The latest developments and innovative projects will be presented at the 17th International Passive House Conference, held in Frankfurt, Germany, on 19 and 20 April 2013. Renowned speakers from all over the world will give lectures on a variety of topics, ranging from thermal insulation to photovoltaic systems for roofs. A trade exhibition held in parallel to the conference will provide an overview of the latest components and systems for building owners and property developers.

"Passive House is not an end in themselves; it guarantees maximum user comfort while providing the most cost-effective solution for new builds to contribute to climate protection and achieving the energy revolution " explains Mark Weinmeister, State Secretary at the Ministry of the Environment of the State of Hesse. Compared with German legal requirements for new builds, Passive House buildings use over 80% less energy for heating. "For more than 20 years, Passive House buildings have met the requirements set out by the European Buildings Directive which stipulates that all new builds in Europe are to be Nearly Zero Energy Buildings as of 2021", says Weinmeister.

No other city has managed to realise energy efficiency in buildings as consistently as Frankfurt, the "Passive House Capital". "With over 300,000 square metres, we have more Passive House living space per person than any other city in Germany – and we intend to consolidate our leading position in this respect", says Olaf Cunitz, Mayor and Chief Planning Officer of the City of Frankfurt. "Our customers' satisfaction is our greatest incentive for making an effective contribution towards the energy revolution", emphasises Frank Junker, Director of ABG Frankfurt Holding, Frankfurt's municipal housing and real estate company. At the conference, Junker will report on experiences with projects involving around 2000 Passive House apartments.

Excellent results have been obtained with the Passive House Standard, not only in new builds but also in retrofits of existing buildings. Additional investment costs are compensated for by the lower heating costs within a few years. "Improving buildings' energy efficiency is thus one of the most attractive investment opportunities for building owners", says Professor Dr. Wolfgang Feist, director of the Passive House Institute. The basic principle "if it has to be done, do it right" is all the more important in the case of refurbishments. "Adding insulation to a building that has just recently received a new coat of plaster is expensive", says Feist. "However, applying thermal insulation when the building needs a new coat of plaster or paint will ultimately save you money". says Feist.

About 50,000 Passive Houses have been built across the globe thus far; a prerequisite for the wide scale implementation of the Standard is the availability of relevant training opportunities, both for architects as well as craftspeople. Since the first "Certified Passive House Designer" examination was offered in 2007, more than 3000 construction professionals have acquired this prestigious qualification. A similar training and certification scheme for Passive House Tradesperson was introduced by the Passive House Institute one year ago and is being offered by a series of external course providers worldwide. "Skilled craftspeople are important partners for consumers and building owners with regard to energy efficiency. We therefore look forward to welcoming specialists and all those with an interest in the subject to a special tradespersons forum at the Conference", explains Dr. Christof Riess, Chief Executive of the Chamber of Crafts for the Frankfurt-Rhine-Main region.

The new version of the Passive House Planning Package (PHPP) will also be presented at the Conference in Frankfurt. The tried and tested design tool is continuously being developed further, now taking into account the increasingly popular combination of Passive House and renewable energies. The EU-funded project PassREg, one of the focal points at the Passive House Conference, aims to optimise this combination for different regions, thus demonstrating how the objectives of the European Buildings Directive for 2021 can already be achieved today.

INTERNATIONAL PASSIVE HOUSE CONFERENCE 2013

Conference and Trade Exhibition: Friday, 19 April and Saturday, 20 April

Organised by the Passive House Institute and the City of Frankfurt

Further information: www.passivehouseconference.org

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