



NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources South Central Region

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SUBJECT: Veridian Homes to sign clean-water charter with local government
and state Department of Natural Resources officials
Green Tier program will benefit Dane Co. lakes and streams

MADISON – Representatives from three area municipalities, a state agency and a local home builder today signed a charter aimed at reducing harmful sediment loading to Dane County's lakes and streams.

Signing of the Green Tier Clear Waters Initiative (GTCWI) Charter is a partnership effort between the regulatory community – Dane County, the Cities of Madison and Sun Prairie, the state Department of Natural Resources -- and Veridian Homes, Wisconsin's largest home builder. Attending were David Simon of Veridian Homes, DNR Secretary Scott Hassett, Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, Sun Prairie Mayor Joe Chase and Elizabeth Kluesner, representing Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk.

"This Charter represents a new way of doing business and one that has benefits for the environment and the building industry," said DNR Sec. Scott Hassett.

Veridian Homes, a major player in the Dane County housing industry, "strongly wanted" to participate in this stormwater reduction project as part of Wisconsin's Green Tier Initiative, according to DNR.

"Veridian Homes was founded around the idea of environmental stewardship. Green building practices, energy-efficiency and top-quality, high-performing homes are our passion. The Clear Water Initiative is a natural fit for Veridian," said David Simon, President of Operations for Veridian Homes.

The following counties are in the South Central Region: Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Grant, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock and Sauk.

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“As a direct result of implementing this Charter, Dane County’s lakes and streams will see a reduction in soil erosion and stormwater runoff beyond that required by current state and local statutes. This reduction will have a direct environmental benefit and since Veridian Homes builds about 25 percent of all homes in Dane County, this benefit stands to be substantial,” Hassett said.

Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz told the group, “Our lakes are a defining part of who we are as a city. Green Tier is another important addition to our comprehensive long-term effort to clean up our lakes. In the past three years we have enacted a ban on phosphorus fertilizers, stepped up street cleaning and started an effort to construct 1,000 rain gardens in the city. Green Tier is a welcome addition to these initiatives.”

In his remarks, Sun Prairie Mayor Joe Chase noted, “This initiative raises the bar for improvement over past practices and provides the conduit for open communication between the State, County, municipalities and the private sector as we look at one of the most significant sources of water pollution. Sun Prairie continues to support these kinds of programs which complement our own storm water management policies and practices.”

“Dane County is proud to be a part of this partnership to go beyond current law to help protect our beautiful lakes and streams by reducing run-off. This is a great example of how getting involved early in the planning process, and building in self-regulatory practices, local governments and builders can work together to protect our natural resources,” Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk said in a statement.

Green Tier is a new program for environmentally responsible businesses in Wisconsin, and the first program of its type in the nation. Qualified businesses and associations make legal commitments to superior environmental performance through agreements or, in this case a charter, with the DNR.

Through its Charter, Veridian Homes LLC will take substantial steps to reduce sediment and nutrient loading of Dane County’s lakes and streams.

Other Dane County municipalities can sign on to the Charter along with new builders as long as they can demonstrate the ability to comply with the Charter.

For more information about Green Tier, visit the DNR Web site at dnr.wi.gov. At the top of the page select the A to Z button, click on “G” and select “Green Tier.”