

CONCRETE HOMES

May/June 2003

Web Site Traffic Reaches New Heights

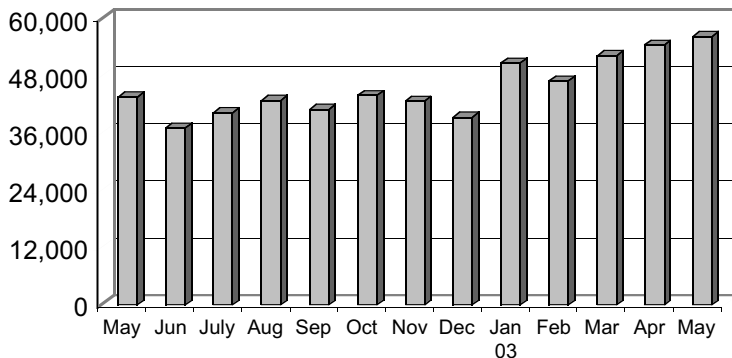
Thanks to advertisements in major trade magazines, word of mouth, and two major trade shows, *Concretehomes.com* is reaching more people than ever. In January 2003, the site recorded 50,675 visitor sessions. By May, the number had grown to over 56,000. That equates to 1,634 sessions per day in January, and 1,811 per day in May. The numbers are roughly 10,000 more than the same months in 2002, and are not inflated, since PCA counts a visitor session only when someone arrives at the site. Movement around the site during that session doesn't count again.

Concretehomes.com has sections on concrete building systems, cement based products, and residential applications for concrete. Sections include countertops, driveways, fiber-cement siding, etc. The complete set of *Residential Technology Briefs* is available to view, in addition to the *Residential Catalog*.

The Concrete Home Plans section is one of the most visited places on the site. There currently are over 130 plans posted to date, showing elevations, floor plans, and specifications. A search feature provides visitors with the ability to identify the type of home they are looking for along with other design specifications. While the plans are not sold directly through PCA, each has a phone number or Web site link for ordering or simply to receive more information. Architects and designers with experience designing concrete homes are also listed in this section by state.

Continued on next page

Total Visitors Sessions



The *Local Contacts* section is for local information. Promoters throughout the U.S. and Canada can submit showcase projects where consumers can receive contact information about local promoters, builders, or developers. Currently, 39 of the 50 states and 7 of the 13 Canadian provinces have a presence on the site.

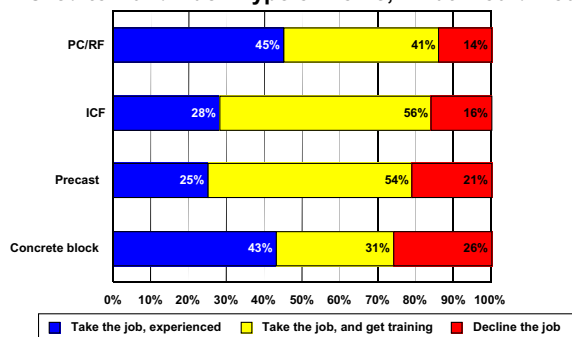
Press Releases, *Calendar of Events*, and *Show Homes* are additional sections available on the *Concretehomes.com* Web site. The *Concrete Homes* newsletter is also archived in the newsletter section. Visit us online at www.concretehomes.com today.

Count on Concrete Home Survey

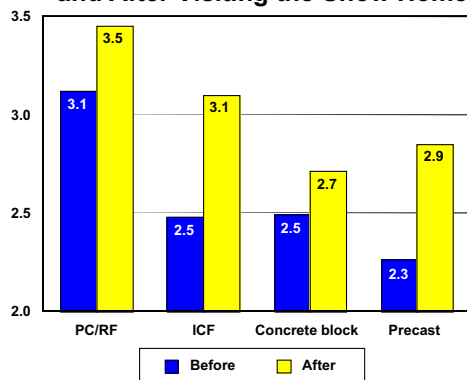
Over 1300 homebuilders and contractors were surveyed after viewing the Count on Concrete Show Home constructed in the parking lot of the Las Vegas Convention Center during the 2003 International Builders Show and the 2003 World of Concrete / World of Masonry. Respondents completed a nine-question survey to assess homebuilder and contractor awareness, use, and perceptions of four above-grade concrete wall systems: concrete block, ICF, poured concrete with removable forms (PC/RF), and precast concrete.

For more information about the Count on Concrete 2003 Show Home Survey, contact PCA Market Research at 847.966.6400.

If Asked to Build Each Type of Home, What Would You do?



Likelihood to Build Each Type of Home Before and After Visiting the Show Home



Safe Rooms and Storm Shelters for Arkansans

Tornadoes, ice storms, floods, and earthquakes are very real disasters in Arkansas. In recent years, Arkansas has experienced more than its fair share of deadly, destructive tornadoes and paralyzing ice storms. In addition, Arkansans must also prepare for the possibility of floods, earthquakes, and now terrorist attacks.

The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation program began sponsoring a statewide rebate program in October 1999, for persons who had installed storm shelters or safe rooms since January 21 of that same year. Following a severe storm system that ravaged the state, the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) now offers a 50% rebate of the total cost of the safe room to a maximum \$1,000. Homeowners are gladly accepting this offer, and many more homes are being built with safe rooms. The rebate program has proven so successful that FEMA contributed approximately \$2 million to the fund during 2002. Rita Madison, Product Education Director for the Arkansas Ready Mixed Concrete Association (ARMCA), has worked with Dan Cicirello, Mitigation Division Manager for ADEM, in promoting this program through numerous presentations to homebuilder associations across the state.

Mr. Cicirello has worked diligently to form a coalition to promote All Hazard Resistant Homes in Arkansas. "The ARMCA and many other associations including government agencies and industries have joined this coalition. Our goal is to encourage new home construction utilizing ...the Hobbs, New Mexico, frame construction techniques, a safe room/in ground shelter, hurricane straps, and window film for an all hazard resistant home" says Mr. Cicirello.

ADEM, in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is leading the way to building an all hazard, disaster resistant state by providing mitigation grant opportunities, training, education, and technical assistance to school districts, communities, and local governmental agencies. The successful program can be considered as a model for other states to duplicate.

In 1999, an estimated 38 tornadoes traveled across central and northeast Arkansas, with the Beebe School District receiving tornado damage to the primary school, auditorium, high school gymnasium, and junior high school. Through Hazard Mitigation Grants, the new high school was constructed with concrete reinforced hallways providing quick, easy access to a safe room for the students.

Tuckerman Schools in Northeast Arkansas also took a proactive approach by applying for and receiving Hazard Mitigation Grants to retrofit hallways on their campus with 12-inch steel reinforced concrete floors, 8-inch concrete walls and ceilings, and steel doors to each classroom.

ADEM currently reports approximately 40 school districts and communities with projects funded in the Storm Shelter Program. A few of these have been completed; others are under construction, with some still in the design phase. Parents in these communities know that if disaster strikes, their children have a safe place to go.

Special thanks to Rita Madison for contributing to this article.



Mr. Dan Cicirello, Mitigation Division Manager for ADEM, has worked diligently promoting All Hazard Resistant Homes throughout Arkansas.

Home in a Dome

After the roof was raised and the doormat was swept, 40,000–50,000 people toured the *Home in the Dome* at the Vancouver, British Columbia, Home & Garden Show February 19–23, 2003.

The *Home in the Dome* was a one-story, 1300-square-foot house designed by award-winning Vancouver architect Jonathan Ehling, and blended emerging technology with traditional architectural design. Constructed with ECO-Block ICF forms, the home was a joint effort by members of the BC Ready-Mixed Concrete Association and the Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association (GVHBA). The home was erected inside the BC Place Stadium and was the first ICF home built for a Canadian home show. Complete concrete solutions such as floors, countertops,

sinks, water features, fireplaces, and sidewalks clearly conveyed to attendees the beauty of concrete.

The Home in the Dome played host to an average of 300 people every 20 minutes during peak show times. And on Saturday and Sunday there was a two-hour wait at the front door.

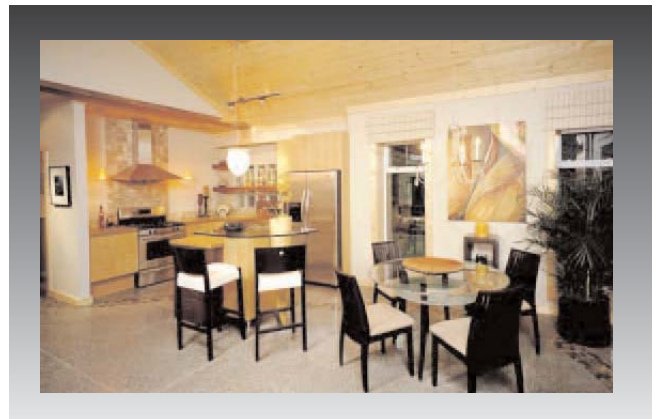
"These numbers show how hungry people are for this kind of construction," said Irv Lenz, manager of Rempel Bros., an ECO-Block distributor. "Demonstrating the beauty of concrete like this was a real eye-opener to those who think of concrete as cold and stale. For many, we completely changed the way concrete is viewed. And we showed the benefits first-hand."

Approximately 77,000 people attended the home show, a 13% increase over last year.

For more information on the Home in the Dome visit <http://www.bcrmca.bc.ca>.



The Home in the Dome project showed 40,000–50,000 Vancouver Home and Garden Show attendees the beauty of concrete.



Visitors waited in line to see the ICF home constructed inside BC Place Stadium in just nine days.

Tools of our trade

Thermal Performance Comparison of Wall Systems investigates the energy efficiency differences of eleven different wall systems in all climatic zones throughout the U.S. and southern Canada. The analysis includes concrete masonry, AAC, ICF, and insulated removable form systems, as well as wood and steel frame walls. The data was modeled on the Department of Energy's software to account for insulation levels, thermal mass, and air infiltration. Not surprisingly, concrete wall systems outperformed both types of frame construction in most of North America.



The 49-page report is only available on a mini-CD in Adobe Acrobat format, which is included on the CD.

Thermal Performance Comparison of Wall Systems
CD-026) Mini-CD format only, \$20 plus shipping

To place your order, call 1.800.868.6733, or visit our Web site at www.concretehomes.com.

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CONCRETE HOMES

Concrete Homes is a monthly newsletter published by the Residential department of the Portland Cement Association to communicate ideas for promoting the use of concrete in homebuilding. We are:

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For more information on concrete homebuilding visit our Web site or call our toll free hotline:

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The Portland Cement Association is an organization of cement manufacturers to improve and extend the uses of portland cement and concrete through market development, engineering, research, education, and public affairs work.


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