

Fire-Resistant House Built for California's Uncertain Climate Future

Solution lies within the walls of this energy-efficient, eco-conscious, healthy home

SAN JOSE, CA, UNITED STATES, July 26, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In recent years California has seen mass devastation caused by wildfires, resulting in numerous fatalities and thousands of structures burned to ashes. The 2018 Camp Fire alone resulted in 86 deaths, 67 hospitalizations, 18k structures destroyed, and 30k people losing their homes.¹ This unfortunate devastation prompted Mohan Mahal, founder and CEO of Sustainable Innovative Design & Construction (SIDCO), to use innovative building technology to construct the company's first fire-resistant residential home in Hollister, CA.



SIDCO's fire-resistant home in Hollister, CA

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Mohan Mahal

While from the outside you see a beautifully built modern home, it's what's on the inside – within the walls – that matters most. SIDCO's wall assembly uses Eco-Smart Structurally Insulated Panels (SIPs) built with fire-resistant magnesium oxide board (MgO) and foam-core insulation. The Eco-Smart SIP's replace the stick framing and OSB of traditionally built houses. In 2021 Mahal took a sample of the MgO board to Paradise and demonstrated its [fire-](#)

[resistant capabilities](#) to city officials. “After seeing the devastation in Paradise, I was moved to find a solution to build safer, fire-resistant homes. SIDCO already builds net-zero, passive-inspired homes and I wanted to make these homes better for people and the environment,” explained Mahal.

In addition to being fire-resistant, the Hollister house is remarkably energy-efficient and received a 10 out of 10 Home Energy Score by the US Department of Energy. At the heart of the Hollister

home lies a heat pump and a heat recovery ventilator (HRV), which work together to passively heat and cool the home using less energy than conventional building methods. Furthermore, the Hollister house has excellent indoor air quality since the sealed building envelope prevents conditioned air from leaking out of the house, while also preventing pollutants from entering the house. "During California's fire season our air quality reaches very unhealthy levels. When I immigrated to the US I never thought the air quality in California would be as bad as New Delhi! When you walk into the Hollister house the air inside is cleaner and cooler than the hot polluted air outside," explained Mahal.

With California's soaring energy costs in mind,² Mahal intentionally made the Hollister house all electric, without any reliance on fossil fuels. "When combined with a renewable energy source like solar, the Hollister house can generate enough electricity to operate itself without using energy from the utility companies," said Mahal. The Hollister home comes equipped with an EV charging station, and is permitted for Tesla solar panels and a Tesla Powerwall. Other notable features of the Hollister house include mold and termite resistance, double-pane Milgard windows, hybrid water heater, LED lighting, water conserving irrigation and landscaping, superior sound dampening, and state-of-the-art LiFi.

For more information on SIDCO:

SIDCO Homes Inc.

Email: info@sidcohomes.com

Phone: (408) 650-8350

For more information on the Hollister home:

Francine Terrell, Broker

Phone: (408) 202-5875

MLS#: ML81883221

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[<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/camp-fire-by-the-numbers/>](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/camp-fire-by-the-numbers/)

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Available at: [<https://calmatters.org/california-divide/debt/2021/03/california-high-electricity-prices/>](https://calmatters.org/california-divide/debt/2021/03/california-high-electricity-prices/)

Manmohan (Mohan) Mahal

SIDCO Homes Inc

+1 408-650-8350

mohan@sidcohomes.com

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