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This Week's Energy Star Summit Taught Me Much About Energy Efficiency

I spent this Monday and Tuesday in the Denver Tech Center, attending the annual Energy Star Summit. Already a certified EcoBroker®, I nevertheless learned a lot that I didn't know, not just in the twelve sessions I attended, but also from the vendors at their booths.

The target audience for this conference was not real estate professionals like me — I saw only one other agent there — but rather homebuilders and those involved in or affected by the energy efficiency industry. Nevertheless, I am very glad I attended.

In fact, Golden Real Estate was one of the sponsoring "partners" for the summit, and I also attended a couple planning sessions for the conference earlier this fall.

During the Summit, I became

familiar with the term "building science," and indeed it is a scientific field of its own. For example, should you have a vented attic with the insulation sitting atop the ceiling of your living space, or should you spray insulation on the underside of the roof and have a conditioned (heated) attic? This is a major shift in thinking.

I had expected more emphasis on solar energy, which I know something about, but instead the emphasis was on creating "high performance homes", which means the control of three flows — heat, air, and moisture. I learned of interesting new technologies in each of these three areas. Some of it was so technical that at times I felt I was back at M.I.T., "drinking from a fire hose." In a pre-conference event Sunday afternoon, I toured a home

under construction in Centennial that is being built to qualify for Platinum LEED certification — the highest certification possible. You can learn about the house and its wide variety of "green" features at www.PlatinumLEEDhome.com. The home uses geothermal, photovoltaic, and solar thermal energy, but, again, the emphasis was not on how the house was powered, but on how little energy it will require due to its construction.

From the vendors at the summit, I found some solutions for my own home. For example, I found an attic fan with built-in insulation, so that I don't have to winterize it. And I found a forced air furnace that I can connect to my home's solar hot water system, replacing the furnace fueled by natural gas.

Although you missed the summit, you can learn more about it, the sessions, and Energy Star at www.e-star.com/summit. And I'd be happy to share more of what I learned with you in person.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH,**
Realtor®

This Week's Featured New Listing:

Walk to the School of Mines & Downtown

This nice 1961 brick ranch has four basement bedrooms that are rented out to four foreign students from the Colorado School of Mines. It's located just a block south of the campus on the corner of 20th St. and Cheyenne St. Among

its many features are a 962-sq.-ft. covered patio and greenhouse, plus an elevator between the main floor and one of the two garages. On the main floor, where the owner lives, are 3 bedrooms and 1½ baths, and a 12'x17' living room. The home measures 2,380 sq. ft. of finished space.



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