

# Good as gold



Jeff Ruppenthal / Staff

Steve and Marijane Ember stand outside their gold LEED certified house in Warwick Township.

■ **Kissel Hill home is county's first, seventh in state to earn special energy efficiency certification.**

BY CHAD UMBLE  
Correspondent

As Steve and Marijane Ember celebrated Christmas last year in their new house outside Lititz, light streamed through their windows.

It struck the back edge of a waist-high wall that separates their living room from a foyer running along the front of the house.

That light against the wall, hitting just so, was no Christmas miracle.

Rather, it was the result of careful, precise planning.

The poured-concrete wall was placed and designed to absorb the heat from the winter

the windows.

That stops the sun from reaching the wall, thereby helping keep the West Woods Drive house cool.

This low-tech effect, which takes into account the low angle of the sun's rays in the winter and their high angle in the summer, goes a long way to

LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

Developed by the nonprofit U.S. Green Building Council, LEED ratings compare the design, construction and operation of green buildings and neighborhoods to nationally accepted benchmarks.

The Embers' house racked up LEED points for use of insulating materials, solar panels, a geothermal heat pump, rain water harvesting and completely permeable paving, among other things.

And the house is built into a hill with a first-floor bedroom about eight feet below ground level, using the earth as a natural insulator.

The Embers and Pellman, whose four-person Manheim company specializes in building environmentally sustainable homes, declined to disclose the cost of the home.

But according to Pellman, construction of a house of

**Lancaster**  
ONLINE.COM



Local video

making the house a showpiece for energy efficiency.

"We didn't want to see how much technology we could introduce, but how little technology we actually would need to have this thing function and be comfortable," said Jesse Pellman of Longview Structures, which built the roughly 3,000-square-foot home.

Last month, the Embers'