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Government launches test of solar heating

The first large-scale test of solar energy in housing is being launched by the federal government with \$1 million in grants for installation of solar units in 140 new and existing dwelling units.

An announcement by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development said grants would go to 55 private builders, public agencies and universities selected from 280 applicants. A second cycle of grants, planned for this summer or fall, will permit newer systems to be included in the test.

Under varying climatic conditions, 102 single-family and 40 multi-family units, including three student residences, will be equipped with commercially-available solar units. Some will provide for home heating only, some for hot water only, and others for a combination of the two. A limited number will demonstrate both solar heating and cooling.

"This large scale test could have strong impact for area homeowners concerned with rising heating and cooling costs," said Michael D. Sammons, executive vice-president of the United Northwestern Realty Association in Farmington.

"We ARE PARTICULARLY pleased that existing dwelling units are included because we feel that this may end up as the major market for solar units capable of filling all or a major share of heating and cooling needs for single-family homes."

"With the present cycle of utility rate increases, our members are finding increased efforts among homeowners to reduce their costs. If the cost-efficiency of

these solar units can be proven and mass production can provide them at reasonable prices, it appears that many homeowners would utilize them."

Claims for one solar hot water heater estimate it would save from 15 to 20 percent of a home's total fuel costs. With this level of saving, even initial installation cost several times that of a regular heater could still mean a substantial saving over a number of years.

With new housing costs continuing to rise, many potential buyers might choose an existing home where solar heating and cooling equipment is or should be installed as a continuing cost saving measure, he said.

"If SAVINGS are substantial enough, it could be advantageous for some homeowners to secure a home improvement loan or even a second mortgage for installation of the equipment," he said. "While this would add to their investment, it also would increase their equity and the savings could contribute greatly to paying off the loan."

"As an incentive to reduce use of present forms of energy, government may even consider a tax credit or tax deduction for installation of solar equipment in new or existing homes. This has been discussed and results of these new tests may provide the needed incentive to pass enabling legislation."

One national research organization already has predicted that 10 percent of homes built in 1985 and 50 percent of those built in 2,000 could be using combined solar heating and cooling.

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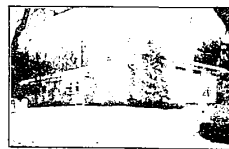
SIX MONTHS OLD, Builder's own Tudor Colonial on treed 1/2 acre in private Bloomfield Hills area. Large concrete circle drive, 2-story quarry tile foyer, big family and living rooms, Arizona Limestone fireplace, massive kitchen. 647-5950. \$159,000.



PRIVATE RETREAT with 120' frontage on Point Creek in Rochester's Paint Valley area. Acre wooded lot, custom Ranch, 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, family room, potbelly stove, fireplace — heated barn, spring-fed pond. 651-8850. \$85,900.



UNIVERSITY HILLS of Rochester. Brick and Aluminum Colonial, Central Air, first floor laundry, large kitchen with built-ins, fireplaced family room, 4 bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths — walk to schools. Yours to inspect. 651-8850. \$77,900.



BACK TO NATURE. Treed ravine with stream and ducks on secluded half acre in Bloomfield Hills. Rustic charm throughout 3 bedroom Ranch. Large family and rec rooms, 2 fireplaces, big windows, Central Air. 646-6000. \$69,900.



LAKE across street. Spacious 5 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath Colonial, library, fireplaced family room, rec room, large first floor laundry, US built-in kitchen, wet bar, deck with BBQ, underground sprinklers — Valued 626-9100. \$79,900.



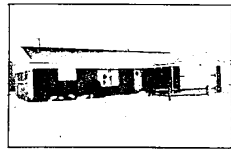
SOUTHFIELD. This is it. Large family Colonial, 4 bedrooms, family room with natural fireplace, 2 1/2 baths, formal dining room, all kitchen built-ins, first floor laundry — easily assumed mortgage. 557-6700. \$51,900.



COMPLETE IN-LAW Suite on first floor plus 3 bedrooms and several finished rooms in basement. 2 more full baths, 18'x10' kitchen with built-ins, beamed family room with fireplace. On over acre with access to Lake. 626-9100. \$79,500.



SOUTHFIELD. Warm your winter evenings, snuggle up to cozy fireplace in family room. 4 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath Colonial with space and convenience for the entire family. Dream, built-in kitchen. Move-in condition. 557-6700. \$61,500.



MT. VERNON ESTATES — lovely Troy community with this immaculate Ranch. Central Air, attic fan, nice fireplaced family room, full basement, 3 bedrooms and 1 1/2 baths. Kitchen and nook have Solarium floor. 689-8900. \$52,900.



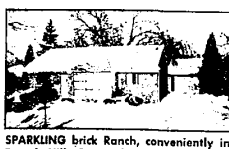
NOVI TOWNHOUSE. 1974 unit in quiet area of highly desirable Old Orchard. Beautiful Clubhouse and indoor-outdoor pool enhance this 2 bedroom family room with one full and two half baths, Central Air, tiled basement. 626-9100. \$31,500.



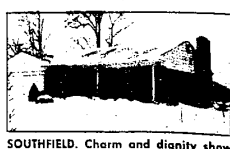
JUST LISTED. Appealing Ranch on spacious country lot in Farmington Hills. Room for comfort in family room, breakfast nook with fireplace, kitchen with built-ins, 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, attic fan, garage openers. 626-9100. \$54,900.



SOUTHFIELD. Magnificent Ranch, garage openers, fireplace, formal dining room, 2 baths, Florida room, full basement, carpet and drapes, all appliances, Central Air, sprinklers. Treed estate lot, close to everything. 557-6700. \$49,000.



SPARKLING brick Ranch, conveniently in Beverly Hills, Birmingham schools. Family room plus nicely done rec room, office, large kitchen, dining room, 3 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, 2 1/2 car attached garage. Superb home! 647-5950. \$46,500.



SOUTHFIELD. Charm and dignity show throughout this 3 bedroom Ranch. Oiled parquet floors, raised hearth fireplace in family room, finished and carpeted rec room. A spotless and outstanding home. 557-6700. \$46,900.

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