

# SMART

## Parade of homes showcases house with a brain

By Susan Buck  
staff writer

IT'S THE end of a long, stressful day and you're headed home. Imagine walking into an empty house and finding that dinner is warming in the electric oven, the air conditioner is cooling and a relaxing bath is waiting with warmed towels.

Too good to be true? No, it's all made possible by the home's computerized brain.

A house with a brain is difficult to imagine.

To help consumers get the picture, Detroit Edison Co., Wake-Pratt Construction Co. of Troy and the Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan will showcase Michigan's first automated, all-electric Smart House May 7-25 at Homearama Spring 1992, a display of new homes built by BASM members.

The 4,900-square-foot Smart House is one of 10 Homearama homes at Meadows At Oakland Farms subdivision on Gunn Road, west of Rochester Road, in Oakland Township.

THIS SMART House is one of only five operable Smart Houses in the world. All are in the U.S.

The first Smart House, built with a

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— Bill Steele  
Detroit Edison

limited amount of SMART-REDI technology, was built in 1991 in Atlanta, Ga., said Bill Steele, Detroit Edison Co. builder liaison.

Other Smart Houses followed, in order, in Columbus, Ohio; Baltimore, Md.; Washington, D.C.; and Las Vegas, Nev. Each one improved upon the one built before, Steele said.

"The computerized Smart House is the home of the future," he said. "It's the Jetsons — 1990s style."

The house features convenience and efficiency, Steele said.

For example, it lets you operate

appliances when you're away from home, monitor the baby's room by switching the television channel and draw the bath water or turn on the shower without getting out of bed.

A videotape, or laser disc, can be played in one room and watched in any room in the house, Steele said. The homeowner can connect a telephone in any room and talk to a person in another room.

THE HOUSE also features a high-efficiency geothermal heat pump, which can save homeowners up to 50 percent on air conditioning and 30 percent on heating costs, Steele said.

Detroit Edison is financing the special wiring in the demonstration house that links together the home's energy, security, lighting, entertainment and other systems.

Three types of specialized electric cables tied to a centralized computer controller — the brain — create the integrated wiring network that makes the house "Smart." The home's various systems can be controlled by using a touch-tone telephone, keypad or touch-screen monitor.

All this wiring adds about \$9,500 to the cost of a 2,500-square-foot house. It costs about \$11,500 to \$12,000 to make a 2,500-square-foot house fully "Smart," Steele said.

DETROIT EDISON teamed up with Wake-Pratt and Smart House Limited

Partnership to bring this technology to Michigan.

Smart House Limited Partnership, based in Upper Marlboro, Md., is a cooperative research and development effort begun in 1984 by the National Association of Home Builders.

"Detroit Edison is presenting this house to the public because we believe our residential customers are looking for cost-effective and energy-efficient alternatives in home management," Steele said.

Added Donald L. Pratt, president of Wake-Pratt: "Smart House is an exciting trend in residential housing."

Homeowners have been waiting for something new, he said.

Detroit Edison will show Smart House by guided tour during Homearama Spring 1992 and then Thursdays through Sundays during June. Wake-Pratt will then sell the house in July.

"Fifteen to 20 people will be brought in at one time (during Homearama)," Steele said. "There will be five groups in the house at the same time, 100 people at one time, at nine stops."

Detroit Edison is a co-sponsor of Homearama, together with Consumers Power Co. — which is promoting an all-natural gas house directly across the street by builder James Rutkowski of James Joseph Enterprises, Inc., Rochester Hills — and Standard Federal Bank.

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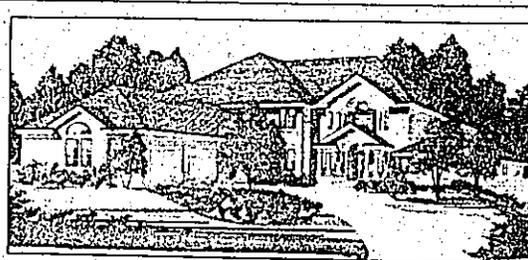
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## Smart House



**Builder:** Wake-Pratt Construction Co., Troy, Donald L. Pratt, 689-2512.  
**Architect:** Bowers & Rein Associates Inc.  
**Landscaper:** Miller Landscaping.  
**Interior Design:** Designer Windows & Interiors.  
**Square feet:** 4,900. **Bedrooms:** 4. **Bathrooms:** 3, 3 half.  
**Price:** \$450,000 to \$525,000.

**Features:** Smart House, sponsored by Detroit Edison, the first of its kind in Michigan featuring totally integrated automation. Fully integrated electronic system to control heating, cooling, lighting, audio-video and other functions in the home. TV monitors in bedroom-nursery to monitor baby. Geothermal heating and cooling. Nine-foot ceilings on main floor. Glass hand rails on staircase, on bridge in foyer and outside deck. First-floor master suite. Additional master suite on second floor. More than 100 recessed lights in home. Super-Smart, triple-glazed, argon-filled Weathershield windows. Lower-level patio area and first-floor deck. Staircases from foyer and kitchen area.