

FALCON HEIGHTS CONTRACTING SPECIALIZES IN BUILDING ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOMES

**Victoria Contractor
Vancouver Island's First Net-
Zero Builder**

VICTORIA – Passion for energy efficiency, and having access to expansive in-house expertise, are some of the keys to success for multi award winning **Falcon Heights Contracting Ltd.** A custom new home builder and regional renovation expert, Falcon Heights has been serving the Greater Victoria marketplace for more than 10 years.

The first CHBA (Canadian Home Builders' Association) certified Net-Zero Builder on Vancouver Island, Falcon Heights Contracting offers its clients the very latest in green building techniques and systems, a level of expertise essential for constructing properties as energy efficient as they are beautiful.

"I really think that the biggest thing for us is our environmental achievements in home construction. We won both Green Builder of the Year (Small Volume) and the Environmental Achievement and Energy Efficiency Awards at this year's CARE (Construction Achievements and Renovations of Excellence) Awards of Vancouver Island," explained Falcon Heights's President **Dave MacKenzie**.

"This was for the house that we just finished, which was a Net-Zero home. Our primary focus right now is in the construction of high end, energy efficient homes – that's the area of the market that we're most interested in pursuing."

Organized each year by the **Victoria Residential Builders Association** (VRBA), the CARE Awards are held to recognize the finest in West Coast home construction and are considered one of the top honours in the profession. At this year's event, attended by more

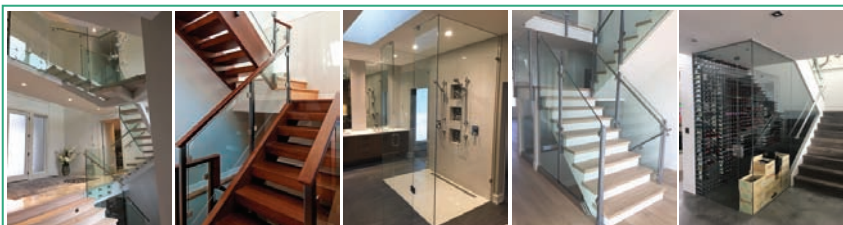


The benefit of a custom home is that it can be configured to meet the exact needs and budget of the homeowner

than 300 VRBA members, Falcon Heights Contracting garnered no less than eight gold and seven silver awards – an all time high for a company that has won numerous other awards in the past.

MacKenzie began his home building career in 1992, starting his carpentry apprenticeship in Whistler, honing his craft by working on some of that unique community's most spectacular properties. He went on to earn his journeyman carpenter certification, spending 14 years working in the Whistler area before relocating to Victoria.

"While our focus right now is primarily on new home



Congratulations to Dave, Joelle, and the team at Falcon Heights Contracting on all of your success. We look forward to collaborating on many more stunning projects.



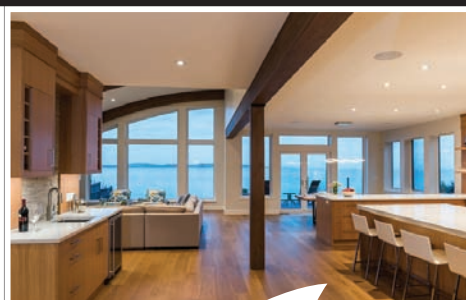
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construction, Falcon Heights has worked on commercial projects in the past, we've done multi-family. Currently we're focusing on our custom home and custom renovation market, but would take on a commercial job if the opportunity is right," he said.

MacKenzie and his team have a genuine passion for constructing energy efficient homes. In addition to being the Island's first certified Net-Zero Builder, Falcon Heights Contracting is also a member of **Built Green Canada**.

A net-zero energy (NZE) house is one that has been designed and constructed to reduce its annual household energy needs to a minimum. Homes of this type frequently include on-site renewable energy systems, so that the house may produce as much energy as it consumes on a yearly basis. NZE houses also tend to be more resilient in that they can continue to offer shelter during power failures, as they need so little energy to operate and remain warm.

According to information released by the **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)** NZE homes also reduce the impact of housing on the natural environment by reducing energy-related pollutant emissions to the land, water and air – pollutants that potentially could contribute to climate change. Homes of this



All of the high end custom homes constructed by Falcon Heights Contracting are built to a Platinum Built Green standard

style are also an excellent way to significantly reduce energy-related costs while providing its owner with built-in protection against future energy cost increases.

An NZE home is not necessarily

an "energy autonomous" house or an "off-grid" house, as it can be connected to the electricity grid, so that it can supply electricity to the grid when it is producing more than it needs and

draw from the grid when household demands exceed the amount of electricity produced on site. Taken over the year, the energy supplied to the grid balances the energy drawn from the grid, thus

achieving net-zero annual energy consumption.

"While we have worked everywhere from Bowen Island to Jordan River, our primary market area is the Greater Victoria region. Essentially all across southern Vancouver Island," he explained.

Co-owned by the husband and wife team of Dave MacKenzie and Joelle Bienvenue, Falcon Heights Contracting has a staff that can fluctuate from 12 to 15, depending on the number of projects currently underway. While having developed excellent working relationships with many of the region's top sub trades, Falcon Heights Contracting from its very beginning put great emphasis on doing as much of the work involved as possible with its own in-house expertise.

"We certainly do all carpentry work in-house, with our great

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This exceptional Net-Zero home constructed by Falcon Heights Contracting won five gold CARE Awards

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apprentices," he said.

While it's often the case that carpenters and tradespersons come to their craft through a family connection, for Mackenzie it was a desire to build things that saw him follow the career path that led to Falcon Heights Contracting. "No, my father wasn't a carpenter, in fact he was an orthopedic surgeon. But it seems like I've had a passion for home construction my whole life. I found myself, in my late teens looking for a vocation so I started my carpentry apprenticeship and never really looked back," he explained.

For MacKenzie, who grew up in the Victoria area, his love for snowboarding, and his new found interest in construction saw him move to Whistler right out of high school – starting on a path that saw him return to Victoria in 2006 when he launched Falcon Heights Contracting.

"Moving to Whistler turned out to have been the best decision I could have made. In the early 1990's there was nothing better in BC, or even in Canada for that matter than building high end custom homes in Whistler. That decision put me solidly into that niche and that's where I've been ever since," he said.

But by the early 2000's an ailing

sub trades handling the other aspects – cabinetry, plumbing, electrical and those types of things. We regularly work with the same group of trusted sub trades with all of the carpentry taken care of in-house with our crew of certified journeymen and

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Falcon Heights Contracting homes are always built using the finest finishing and materials throughout

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parent and a yearning to return to his home town helped motivate MacKenzie to take the skills and expertise he had developed in that exclusive mountainside community and introduce them to the Victoria marketplace. The CARE award recognition Falcon Heights received this year is continuing proof that he made the right decision to return home, with his skills and his vision for the construction of homes of the finest quality and with the highest energy efficiency.

This year's wealth of awards is only the latest for Falcon Heights Contracting, as the company has been recognized by the construction industry in some capacity every year since it was launched.

"We've been winning awards for the past six years. We've won Georgie Awards from the Canadian Home Builders' Association of British Columbia (CHBA BC) in the past, but this is certainly the largest haul of awards we've ever won at a single time. It was certainly an exceptional experience for us," MacKenzie stated.

But collecting accolades is not the motivation that has kept Falcon Heights Contracting at the forefront of the industry, it's the desire to learn, to do the job better each time that has helped to make the firm an industry leader.

"Our goal is to stay at the forefront, in an industry that is always



This rear view of the Net-Zero home shows off the home's elegant and rustic backyard – perfect for that morning coffee

Congratulations to our friends at Falcon Heights Contracting on your success and many awards. You deserve it!

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changing and evolving as new technology becomes available. Learning about the new technology and providing ongoing training for all of us, will help ensure that we stay at the leading edge. We take that very seriously. We also incorporate that knowledge into all of the homes that we build, regardless of the energy efficiency priorities of the homeowner," he explained.

"Our homes all start at what is known as a Platinum Built Green standard, that's the benchmark we bring to every job. We then take it from there, depending on how much more the client wants to put into their home."

Established, leading edge, multi award winning Falcon Heights

Contracting looks forward to sharing its passion for energy efficiency with a wider audience in the years to come. "I think our team approach to building a house is one of our greatest strengths. We strive to do as much in-house to ensure the clients not only get a well-built house, but one that is on time and on budget," he said.

"We have great control of our projects, having the team and manpower to do so, that ensures a continuity of quality from start to finish. Being at the forefront of energy efficiency the client benefits at all levels, our standard of construction is so far above code that they are going to end up with

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One of the keys to a Net-Zero home is its ability to create its own power, such as with use of solar panels



Being extremely energy efficient doesn't mean being uncomfortable, as the interior of the winning home shows



The Net-Zero home has been designed to be open and spacious, and to benefit from a large amount of natural light

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a property that is comfortable and energy efficient, regardless of the scale or budget. That's just the way that we build them."

While having worked on commercial projects in the past, for the future the bulk of the workload for Falcon Heights Contracting will remain its high end, energy efficient new homes and renovations. "As we move forward we'll keep improving our skills, training our team and delivering the best projects we can build. Doing the job right, that's what it's all about," Mackenzie explained.

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"I really think that the biggest thing for us is our environmental achievements in home construction."

DAVE MACKENZIE

PRESIDENT, FALCON HEIGHTS CONTRACTING LTD.



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