



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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## **New Zealand Wins Engineering Contest at U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – New Zealand (Victoria University of Wellington) took first place today in the Engineering Contest during the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011. The Solar Decathlon challenges collegiate teams from around the world to design, build, and operate houses that are affordable, highly energy efficient, attractive, and easy to live in. The teams spend almost two years creating houses that are currently competing in 10 contests on the National Mall's West Potomac Park.

"Innovative engineering that maximizes energy efficiency in a home is the heart of the Solar Decathlon," said Richard King, director of the Solar Decathlon for the U.S. Department of Energy. "The impressive houses designed by this year's collegiate teams all have practical applications that can help every American family save money. This year's houses are proving to be highly reliable, which is a testament to their engineering excellence."

For the Engineering Contest, each competing house was evaluated by a group of prominent engineers who determined which house best exemplifies excellence in energy efficiency savings, creative design innovations, and the functionality and reliability of each system. New Zealand scored 93 out of a possible 100 points.

Engineering Juror Dr. Hunter Fanney, a chief mechanical engineer with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in its Building Environment Division, said, "New Zealand's house represents an accomplishment of modern engineering and delivers significant energy savings. All of the Solar Decathlon student engineers have gained hands-on training that uniquely positions them to enter the workforce with valuable experience already under their belts."

SCI-Arc/Caltech (The Southern California Institute of Architecture and California Institute of Technology) claimed second place in the Engineering Contest with 91 points, and The University of Tennessee took third place with 90 points. Full details on the contest results are available at [www.SolarDecathlon.gov](http://www.SolarDecathlon.gov).

Following today's announcement, the teams currently in the overall lead for Solar Decathlon 2011 remain Maryland, Ohio State and Purdue, respectively. New Zealand jumps to sixth place, SCI-Arc/Caltech is now in fourth place, and Tennessee is in thirteenth place overall.

For the Engineering Contest, the jury evaluated the houses on the following criteria:

- **Functionality** – ensuring the energy and HVAC systems function as intended.
- **Efficiency** – measured by how much energy the house would save over the course of a year relative to using conventional systems.
- **Innovation** – evaluating the design solutions and their true market potential.
- **Reliability** – testing the systems and how well they operate at a high level of performance.
- **Documentation** – providing drawings, a project manual, and an audiovisual engineering presentation that accurately reflect the project as constructed on the competition site.

The winner of the overall competition is the team that best blends affordability, consumer appeal, and design excellence with optimal energy production and maximum efficiency.

Results from the Communications Contest, also worth 100 points, will be announced Friday, September 30, at 2:30 pm in the solar village on the National Mall's West Potomac Park. The Solar Decathlon's overall winner will be announced on Saturday, October 1, at 2:30 pm.

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon is open to the public through Sunday, October 2. The houses are open for free tours each weekday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, and on weekends from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm.

For full event information, current standings, high-resolution photos, videos, an event schedule and daily results, visit [www.solardecathlon.gov](http://www.solardecathlon.gov). You can also follow the competition real-time on Facebook at [Facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon](https://www.facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon) and Twitter at [@Solar\\_Decathlon](https://twitter.com/Solar_Decathlon).

### **More about the Solar Decathlon**

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011 is an award-winning program that challenges collegiate students from around the world to design, build and operate solar-powered houses that are affordable, highly energy efficient, attractive, and easy to live in. The competition shows consumers how to save money and energy with affordable clean energy products that are available today. The nearly two-year projects culminate in an unprecedented display of affordable green living and design on the National Mall's West Potomac Park from September 23 – October 2, 2011. The Solar Decathlon also provides participating students with hands-on experience and unique training that prepares them to enter our nation's clean energy workforce, supporting the Obama Administration's goal of transitioning to a clean energy economy while saving families and businesses money.

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