

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact  
Mark Lowham, Senior Vice President,  
WEST\*GROUP  
(703) 714-2126 (Direct)  
[mclowham@west-group.com](mailto:mclowham@west-group.com)



### Local Kids Get a Preview of the Region's First Carbon Neutral House

McLean, VA, May 12, 2009. The “GreenHouse” is ready for a sneak peek. WEST\*GROUP has invited some 200 Fairfax County elementary school students to tour the project which is scheduled to be completed in July. While the house is under construction, students will be able to see some of the “guts” of the house – the materials and systems behind the soon-to-be finished walls.

The GreenHouse combines innovative engineering and construction techniques, renewable energy systems, and a walkable location to reduce the carbon footprint of the family who will eventually live in it. State-of-the-art energy modeling allowed planners to position the house on the site to maximize the benefits of the sun and to reduce the energy required to heat and cool the house. The walls and roof are built from Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) which provide high thermal efficiency while consuming less lumber for construction. Solar panels will generate electricity and hot water for the house, and a geothermal system will heat and cool the house. The plumbing fixtures are all designed to use significantly less water. The house is located just a short walk from the amenities of McLean and two Metro Bus Stops.

The GreenHouse is a partnership between WEST\*GROUP and Arlington based

GreenSpur, Inc. Mark Turner of GreenSpur and Michael Day of Cunningham Quill Architects who designed the house will be on site to show the students a model and answer questions about its construction.

WEST\*GROUP's Mark Lowham notes, "Kids are quick studies, and now sustainability is part of their everyday conversations. My own kids are prompting me everyday to consider better choices about how we live. We hope that everyone who learns about this project, regardless of age, finds something they can use to live better in their own day-to-day lives."

The house will open to the public for three weeks in October as the CharityWorks GreenHouse. Twenty one of the region's leading interior designers will decorate and furnish the house using sustainable, environmentally responsible resources. Prominent interior designer, Barry Dixon of Barry Dixon, Inc. is chairing the Design Committee. Proceeds from the GreenHouse will benefit the educational programs of McLean Project for the Arts and the Friendship Public Charter School.

For more information on the project, visit [www.CO2FreeLiving.com](http://www.CO2FreeLiving.com) or [www.CharityWorksGreenHouse.com](http://www.CharityWorksGreenHouse.com)

#### About WEST\*GROUP

For over 50 years, the folks at WEST\*GROUP have provided leadership in developing new ways for people to live and work in our region. Looking ahead, our goal is to focus on locations where we can embrace both innovative building principles and smart planning to accommodate the projected growth of our region in a manner that is sustainable and environmentally responsible.

**Tours for the Franklin Sherman Elementary School students will be held on May 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> - just a short walk to the project from the school at 1310 Calder Road, McLean, VA:**

**May 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:25 am - 11:00 am and  
May 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 am -2:00 pm.**