

# Survey results more optimistic and green

We've all heard that the U.S. economy is looking up, but is it? If the results of Associated Designs' 2011 Home from the Heart survey are any indication, this optimism just might be justified.

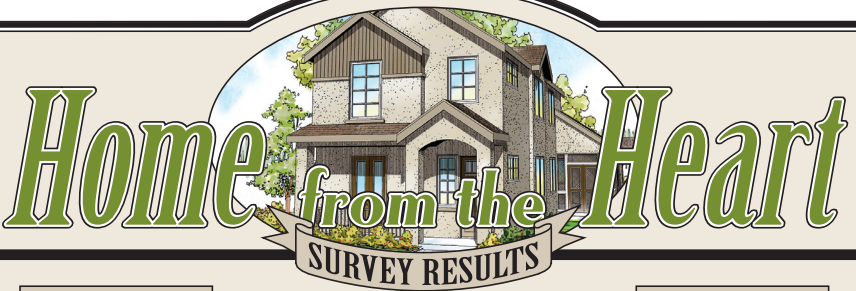
Last year nearly half of the participants expressed a preference for a home in the 1400-1800 square foot range. This year a third want a home in the 1800-2200 range, and another 30 percent prefer an even larger home. Only about 25 percent are now considering a smaller home. This upswing in size preference could well indicate an increase in economic optimism, both personal and national.

This is just one of the trends that emerged when the Associated Designs staff tallied results from the survey. Newspaper readers like yourself from all over the United States had a chance to participate, and many sent in their preferences and comments.

Some preferences are holding pretty firm. As in the past, 80 percent or more opted for a front porch, wanted the utility room adjacent to the kitchen, and said they preferred having a main floor owners' suite, well isolated from the other bedrooms.

Not too surprisingly, the percentage of readers who want a computer center has been slowly edging up for many years. This reflects the undeniable fact that computers have become increasingly relevant, and even essential, to everyday life. This year, 70 percent are asking for an area such as this, the same percentage as for a deck or patio. Nearly 60 percent also want either a fireplace or woodstove, plus room for a shop and storage in the garage.

More people this year expressed willingness to pay extra for green building features. Forty percent said they'd be willing to spend an additional five percent, which nearly doubles last year's percentages. A quarter said they would spend 10 percent more. Participants expressed the strongest desire for advanced insulation and heat pumps. This boost in spending is an indication that more and more people are beginning to insist on green features as a standard in new home construction.



## Home from the Heart

SURVEY RESULTS

### TYPE OF HOME

Average size of home:  
2515 sq.ft.  
Range of responses:  
1500-8000 sq.ft.

**62%** One story  
**35%** Two story  
**3%** More than two story

**56%** Basement

**34%** Wheelchair accessible

Average budget: \$316,288  
Range of responses:  
\$60,000-\$1,500,000

Exterior style:  
**26%** Ranch  
**15%** Craftsman  
**11%** Contemporary  
**7%** Traditional  
**7%** Bungalow  
**34%** All other styles

### LIVING AREAS

**62%** Informal great room with open living, kitchen & dining areas

**7%** Formally defined spaces with separation of functions

**31%** Combination of formal spaces and great room

Number of bedrooms: 3.1  
Number of baths: 2.8  
Number of "en-suites": 1.8 (bedrooms with private baths)

### OWNERS' SUITE

Best location:  
**83%** Main floor  
**14%** Upper floor  
**89%** Isolated from other bedrooms  
**11%** Adjacent to other bedrooms

# 2011

### KITCHEN

**22%** Gourmet style kitchen, rich in amenities

**63%** Full function kitchen with ample features

**15%** Efficient kitchen with focus on space saving and multiple functions

**65%** Open to family room

**31%** Adjacent to garage

### UTILITY ROOM

**83%** Adjacent to kitchen/garage

**52%** Adjacent to bedrooms

### GARAGE

Number of cars: 2.6

**59%** Storage/shop

### EXTRAS

Interior:  
**59%** Fireplace/woodstove  
**45%** Vaulted ceilings  
**33%** Skylights  
**70%** Computer center  
**23%** Wet/service bar  
**19%** Swimming pool

Exterior:  
**92%** Front porch  
**70%** Deck/patio  
**59%** Screened porch  
**15%** Courtyard  
**34%** Fireplace  
**26%** Spa/hot tub  
**23%** Water feature

### GREEN BUILDING

Would you consider using the following "green building" techniques & products?

**37%** Site selection to minimize impact

**59%** Design to minimize impact on trees, streams & slopes

**59%** Advanced framing techniques to reduce materials & waste

**74%** Advanced insulation to save energy

**29%** Use of recycled or salvaged materials

**74%** High efficiency heat pumps, ground source heat pumps, or solar space heating/cooling

**59%** Water efficient faucets, showerheads & toilets

**41%** Low VOC (volatile organic compound) paints, sealants & adhesives

How much extra would you consider spending to reduce environmental impact or increase energy efficiency?

**15%** Would spend no extra, only use items with little or no extra cost

**41%** Would spend 5% extra

**26%** Would spend 10% extra

**3%** Would spend 20% extra

**3%** No budget constraints; use as many "green" techniques as practical

### HOUSEHOLD

Number of people: 2.7  
Age of respondent: 53

**44%** Plan to build a home  
**22%** Plan to buy a home

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