

APPLIANCES ARE THE DAILY TOUCH POINTS OF A HOUSE

The design of the ProHOME and the layout of each individual room will shape the experience of living in the house. In places such as the kitchen and the laundry room, however, the daily interactions with the appliances will have a profound impact on the success of those rooms. To limit the electric load of the house, the starting point for selecting kitchen and laundry-room appliances in the ProHOME was an Energy Star rating. From there, features were considered that would make daily life a little more convenient.

Creating space for a second-floor laundry room simplifies the laundry process by having the washer and dryer near the bedrooms and showers, where the dirty clothes accumulate and where the clothes will return when they're clean.

The washer (WFE92HEFC) and dryer (WED9290FC) are both from Whirlpool. Among the washer's time-saving features is an integrated detergent reservoir that takes care of a dozen loads with a single fill. The machine's FanFresh option allows you to start and change loads when it fits your schedule. Once the washer's spin cycle is complete, a fan blows air over the clothes and periodically tumbles them to prevent them from acquiring a damp smell. The postspin tumbling and fan also allow for a small load of two to four items made from synthetic fabrics (such as workout clothes) to be tossed in the washer on the way to bed so that they'll be clean and dry when the sun comes up.

The innovative Whirlpool heat-pump dryer is perfect for a tight house like this. A vented (traditional) dryer blows a good deal of air out of the house, and replacement air must come from somewhere. In older, leakier homes, the replacement air is pulled in through holes in the envelope, such as the unsealed space between a window and the rough opening. Tight homes require either planned makeup air or a ventless dryer. Ventless, or condensing, dryers have been around for a number of years and have generally gotten a bad reputation for long cycles that don't quite dry the clothes. Ventless dryers such as this one that replace the air-cooled or water-cooled condensing surface of the dryer with the cool coil of a heat pump and that heat the drying air with a hot coil reduce dryer energy consumption by 50% to 60%. Homeowner reviews claim that clothes, especially bath towels, are also much softer when dried in a heat-pump dryer.

One of the principles that Guertin wanted embodied in the house was flexibility. When situations arise allowing him to future-proof the house by accommodating potential

changes a homeowner might make, he tries to build in those accommodations. The laundry area presented two opportunities for this: The heat-pump dryer is a nice appliance with great energy performance, but it is more expensive than a traditional dryer. Guertin has ducted the walls for both venting and makeup air in the event that a future owner installs a conventional dryer. The second opportunity is in the walkout lower level that is a potential in-law apartment. To accommodate self-contained living on that level, Guertin has prepared a laundry area. The dryer is connected to a Dryerbox in-wall receptacle, which allows the dryer to be pushed tight to the wall. The duct runs upward and connects with an In-O-Vate low-friction elbow that exhausts out the sidewall. Keeping the duct run as straight and smooth-flowing as possible not only increases efficiency, which speeds up drying time, but it also discourages lint buildup. A makeup-air duct outfitted with Tamarack Technology's Cape Vent prevents unwanted air infiltration. Tamarack, a manufacturer



High-performance dryer for a tight house.
A heat-pump dryer drastically lowers energy consumption while eliminating the need to provide mechanical makeup air that a vented dryer would require in a house with an effective air-sealing strategy.



Efficient and convenient. Flexibility is a theme throughout the kitchen, which contains a microwave with convection-baking capability, a dishwasher with convertible racking and special scrub-jet zones, and a refrigerator with icemakers in the refrigerator door and freezer drawer as well as plenty of specialized storage for everything from frozen pizzas, to produce, to drinks.

of ventilation equipment and controls, is also supplying a Dragon 150 garage exhaust fan. This type of ventilation appliance is often overlooked, but it's an important safety feature in a home with living space over the garage. The fan exhausts fumes—whether CO from vehicle exhaust or from gas storage cans or fertilizer bags—so that they don't find their way into the house. The Dragon fan can be wired to a timer switch or wired to run for a set period each time the garage-door opener is activated.

The stainless-steel suite of Whirlpool kitchen appliances includes plenty of features that a family will appreciate when they're cooking and cleaning up after mealtimes. The five-burner ceramic glass cooktop electric range (WEE730H0DS) offers plenty of stovetop cooking options, including a warming area, and the oven's rapid preheat function reaches the target temperature quickly. The over-range microwave

(WMH76719CS) features convection-oven capability for additional baking flexibility and also houses an exterior-vented exhaust fan, which will have a Cape Vent in the duct to prevent drafts.

The 26-cu.-ft. French-door refrigerator (WRV986FDEM) has lots of handy features, including two pull-out drawers. One of these drawers has five selectable temperature settings, so it can be tuned for specific items such as meat and fish, or cheeses, or frozen food that needs to thaw. The other drawer is for produce.

The dishwasher's (WDT920SADM) convertible racking has tines that fold out of the way or slide into wider configurations to accommodate all sizes of bowls, pots, and casserole dishes. Forty targeted spray jets mounted on the rack scour all surfaces to make sure cookware is fully cleaned.