

15TH INTERNATIONAL PASSIVE HOUSE CONFERENCE 2011

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The Energy Revolution - with the Passive House Standard: Experts convene in Innsbruck at the weekend

More than 1,200 participants from more than 50 countries will meet to discuss sustainable solutions at the world's important convention for energy efficient construction in Innsbruck. Eight plenary talks, 72 presentations, 30 poster presentations and a freely accessible components exhibition will round off the event.

Innsbruck, 28.05.2011 – While the rest of the world discusses ways to solve the energy supply problem, more than 80 experts at International Passive House Conference this weekend in Innsbruck will demonstrate how even today the energy consumption in the building sector can be reduced by around 80%. 16 working groups (German/English/French) will look at the regional implementation of the Standard and discuss topics like refurbishments, heat supply, non-residential constructions and economic efficiency. Deputy Governor Anton Steixner, local councillor Hans Haller, Vice Principal Arnold Klotz of the University of Innsbruck and Theodor Zillner of the Federal Ministry of Transport Innovation and Technology in Austria will inaugurate the Conference on Friday.



From the left: Engelbert Spieß (Neue Heimat Tirol), Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Feist (Passive House Institute/Innsbruck University), Deputy Governor of the State of Tyrol Hannes Gschwentner and Prof. Dr. Klaus Lügger, Director of the Neue Heimat Tirol. (Photo: Passive House Institute)

Less is more

“The valency of energy in a sustainable structure is completely different from that of the present wasteful system. And in the last decades we have learnt already that the energy demand of all essential services can only be reduced considerably if these are managed with the efficiency required for sustainability. The Passive House building standard being demonstrated, not only in Central Europe, is an impressive example of this. With such improved efficiency, meeting the remaining demand sustainably through renewable energy sources is neither an ecological nor an economical problem“, explains Professor Dr. Wolfgang Feist (Passive House Institute / University of Innsbruck).

Global principle, regional solutions

Deputy Governor of the State of Tyrol Hannes Gschwentner is happy that “Tyrol and Innsbruck are developing into a centre of excellence for energy efficient construction in the alpine region“. And rightly so. The location chosen for this event has gained comprehensive experience with large-scale Passive House projects, which will be presented in a separate working group. Two of the world’s largest Passive House housing complexes, the “Lodenareal“ and the “O3“ are located in Innsbruck and can be viewed by participants during the excursions on Sunday. “The „Lodenareal“ project which consists of 354 rental apartments demanded a high standard of expertise from the colleagues at Neue Heimat Tirol. Today this building, which is also outstanding due to its size, has already received great attention all over Europe”, explains Prof. Dr. Klaus Lugger (Director of the Neue Heimat Tirol Gemeinnützige WohnungsGmbH). “We are trying to limit running costs to a minimum, particularly the heating costs. Through structural restorations, insulation of facades, ceilings and roofs, or replacement of windows and doors we can reduce the energy demand of residential buildings effectively on a continuous basis.“

The vast range of practical possibilities for realising Passive Houses was demonstrated by Ludwig Rongen (Rongen Architekten GmbH) and Dr. Jürgen Schnieders (Passive House Institute) during the Plenary Session. Sarah Mekjian (iPHA – International Passive House Association) emphasises: “The Passive House Standard has proven itself in more than 32,000 Passive Houses across Europe. The implementation of the Passive House Standard in the USA, Chile, Korea, Ireland, UK, Slovenia, Russia and Slovakia will be presented in several working groups here in Innsbruck “.

Leading Passive House regions

As set out in the European Buildings Directive, public authorities should set a good example. “Currently there are **27 leading Passive House Regions in Europe, with a total of 25 million residents**, that have committed themselves voluntarily to the application of the Passive House Standard in the construction of public buildings“, says Professor Dr. Wolfgang Feist. This shows that the Passive House concept is ideally suited for all regions around the world. Leading Passive House regions like Brussels, Oslo, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Hanover and the Austrian regions of Vorarlberg, Lower Austria, Vienna and Wels will demonstrate how successful exemplary commitment of public authorities can be with the Passive House Standard. Emulating these examples is desirable.



Prof. Feist at the logo from Brussels, one of the leading Passive House regions presented at the conference (Photo: Passivhaus Institut)

Quality assurance

The energy-efficient refurbishment of buildings plays a key role and will be a central focus in four working groups. Schools, listed historic buildings and a brewery with a hotel – all these will show that the use of Passive House components improves living quality and reduces the heating demand by up to 90%. Initial results of the EnerPHit certification for modernisations of old buildings will be presented, proving that quality assurance is also possible for modernisations (quality standard for high quality modernisation of old buildings). Experiences gained with the use of the Passive House Standard in non-residential buildings with completely different uses (schools, swimming pool, supermarket or bank) for new constructions as well as for refurbishments will also be presented in detail.

Qualification of skilled craftsmen

Specific transfer of expertise is a prerequisite for a high standard of quality on-site. A new addition this year is the Forum for Craftsmen, which has been organised by the Passive House Institute and the IG Passivhaus Tirol. This will provide free lectures for craftsmen and contracting companies. "The qualification of craftsmen is decisive for realising energy efficient constructions. The success of a new building built to the Passive House Standard, or even a refurbishment with Passive House components, depends on the professional competence of the craftsmen. The crafts trades worker is thus best prepared to meet the new requirements of the market", says Wolfgang Feist. The Passive House Institute will soon be offering certification for craftsmen. The course materials for the very first examination for certified craftsmen will be available from autumn this year.

Passive House Exhibition

Around 100 exhibitors will be presenting intelligent solutions for new and old constructions. Passive House components provide for a high level of comfort with very low energy costs. Whether you are looking for insulation materials, windows or ventilation systems with heat recovery – all leading suppliers of Passive House components will be represented. Lectures by Passive House experts will be offered continuously at the Manufacturers' Forum for all those interested in construction. The Passive House Institute, the IG Passivhaus Deutschland, the International Passive House Association and also the IG Passivhaus Tirol will also be represented at the Exhibition.

The Passive House sets the standard for energy efficient construction all over the world. No other building standard has managed to achieve energy savings of up to 90% with such small additional investments. This is the reason why the Passive House, with 32,00 accommodation units across Europe today, forms the basis of the “nearly zero energy buildings” which will become a compulsory building standard from 2020 in Europe.

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