

## **Now Couldn't Be a Better Time to Buy a Manufactured Home**

**PHOENIX, AZ** (October 13, 2009) – Economic indicators suggest that the current housing market crisis is starting to recover, as mortgage rates have dipped to an all-time low, and home inventories have started to decline. Interest rates remain low, but for how long? As a result, now couldn't be a better time to buy a new manufactured home.

Many positive programs have helped contribute to this upswing in the housing market. All-time lower land values and mortgage rates have made financing a manufactured home more affordable than in recent years. With President Obama's extension of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, which established the First-Time Home Buyers Tax Credit, today's manufactured home has never been more affordable for first-time home buyers, with a maximum credit amount of \$8,000 available for homes purchased between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009, and even though this program ends soon, it's not too late to get in on it. Additionally, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) made approximately \$10 billion in purchase funds available for the Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program (SFHGLP). These USDA loans are primarily to assist low-income individuals or households purchase homes in rural areas.

A number of efficiencies and overall savings are inherent to the factory-built process. Factory employees are scheduled and managed more efficiently, as opposed to contracted labor employed by the site-built housing industry. Manufactured home building also benefits from the ability to purchase large quantities of building materials and products. As a result, manufacturers are able to negotiate better prices on materials for their homes and pass these savings on to the homebuyer. The controlled environment and assembly-line techniques also help manufacturers avoid many of the problems encountered with site-built construction, including inclement weather, theft, vandalism, and damage to building products and materials stored on site. All these factors directly contribute to the greater affordability of today's manufactured homes.

Manufactured housing offers a unique source of quality, non subsidized homes that people can afford. Unlike the site-built sector, manufactured home quality is still held to the highest standards. Manufactured home profit margins have also never been as high as in the site-built market. With an average per-square foot cost savings of up to 35 percent less than site-built homes, with actual savings dependent on the geographic region, today's manufactured homes provide homebuyers with the best value to be found in the housing marketplace.

Today's manufactured homes can be financed the same as any other home. Some of the options available include personal property loans (purchasing the home separate from the land) and conventional financing (land/home packages) with fixed and adjustable rate mortgages. VA and FHA financing is also available. Buyers can arrange financing directly with a Model Center or through the lender of their choice. Model Center Financing Specialists are an excellent resource to help home buyers choose the right option to fit their lifestyle and budget.

The continual evolution of energy efficiency resources has resulted in a significant jump in the numbers of manufacturers building EnergyStar-labeled Manufactured Homes. Manufacturers are taking full advantage of the latest innovations in material recycling to produce insulation, carpeting and building materials that not only outperform traditional materials, but also last longer, help reduce costs and are environmentally friendly as well. Dual-pane windows, compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), and more energy-efficient heating and cooling equipment and appliances help homeowners realize substantial savings on their energy costs.

The Arizona Housing Association is dedicated to increasing home ownership opportunities in Arizona by focusing on image improvement, zoning equality and customer satisfaction. Its membership includes Manufacturers, Retailers, Developers, Lenders, Contractors/Installers, Suppliers, and Brokers of Pre-Owned Homes. AHA has a legislative and regulatory program designed to protect and promote the interests of the industry. It also conducts educational programs designed to address members' needs and industry issues.