

Smaller New Homes Remain Trend Beyond the Recession

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It wasn't so long ago when McMansions were becoming the norm in suburban neighborhoods across the country. When the recession hit, however, the size of newly-built homes started to decrease — from 2,268 square feet in 2006 to 2,100 square feet last year.

As the country begins to climb out of the tough economic times of the past few years, it doesn't necessarily mean that the size of homes will go back to a bigger footprint, according to a recent study by economists at the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

"A new housing market is emerging, and even with the recession in the rear view mirror we expect the popularity of smaller homes to persist," said Bob Jones, chairman of NAHB and a home builder from Bloomfield Hills, Mich. "Builders are responding to a new mindset among home buyers that has been shaped not just by a weak economy, and it is transforming the product they deliver."

There are other factors that are likely contributing to this new trend.

First, Americans are becoming more focused on energy conservation. A smaller new home will cost less to heat and cool than a larger home with similar energy-efficient features, and will leave a smaller carbon footprint.

In addition, family size has been decreasing over the years. The average household in 1960 had 3.3 people, while in 2009 it was 2.63. Families don't need to build homes with a lot of bedrooms if they aren't planning to have as many kids as previous generations.

The economy is also affecting new home buyers' decisions. Cost-conscious home buyers are choosing to include more and higher-quality features in their new homes rather than add square

footage. For example, a family may prefer to have high-end appliances and granite countertops in their kitchen rather than larger rooms.

Finally, around one-third of new homes are typically purchased by first-time buyers, who can often only afford smaller homes.

So the “perfect” home for your family may be a showstopper such as The New American Home 2011 — a more than 9,000 square foot home in Orlando built to the highest level in resource efficiency under the National Green Building Standard — or it may be something very different.

Whatever your preference — size, features, price, or something else — new home builders today are providing homes that will appeal to a wide range of tastes and budgets, with more customization choices for your lifestyle than ever before.

Find your Quality Standards new home builder in the Greater Lafayette area at www.bagl.info or visit www.move.com.