



Innovation and sustainability power KB Home's future

PROJECT DETAILS



Property Type
Single Family



Location
Escondido, CA



Incentive Programs
Energy-Smart Homes



Equipment Installed
HPWH and HVAC
Systems

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For decades, KB Home has been at the forefront of innovation, known for delivering high-performance housing that meets the evolving needs of homeowners. Today, that legacy continues under the guidance of Jacob Atalla, vice president of innovation and sustainability.

For Atalla, the connection between innovation and sustainability is inseparable. “Innovation is essential to building better homes and operating more responsibly as a company requires sustainability, and vice versa,” Atalla says.

From net-zero energy homes to the development of fully electric communities, the company has consistently looked for ways to reduce carbon emissions while enhancing comfort and value for its customers.

The Energy-Smart Homes partnership

Through its participation in the Energy-Smart Homes program, their sustainability work has increased in recent years. The program provides both technical guidance and a framework for builders like KB Home to align with the state's aggressive climate goals.

“Innovation often comes with a cost. Incentives from the Energy-Smart Homes program help us offset those costs so we can keep moving the market forward,” says Atalla.

For the builder, one of the most significant benefits has been the \$3,000 per-home base incentive for electrification. These cash incentives help offset the added cost of adopting new technologies such as heat pump water heaters and HVAC systems, which are critical to the performance of all-electric homes.

In 2024, 58% of all homes KB Home delivered in California were all-electric. Atalla credits the program with helping remove some of the barriers that can often slow market transformation. “That number of homes is growing and it's in no small part that the credit goes to the Energy-Smart Homes program,” he says.

Energy efficiency meets fire resilience

According to CALFIRE, in 2025 alone, 5,362 wild land fires burned 354,878 acres.

That said, KB Home continues to not only innovate to reduce its carbon emissions but is also meeting fire dangers head on, building its first wildfire-prepared community to standards developed by the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety.

With incentives and cost savings from the Energy-Smart Homes program, KB Home was able to integrate these wildfire resilience measures without impacting prices for homebuyers in their new all-electric neighborhood, Dixon Trail, in Escondido, near San Diego.

The community has “defensive zones” and fire barriers to slow the advance of flames. On each home, ember-resistant vents, fire-resistant glass, hardened exteriors, tile roofs, and noncombustible fencing add further protection. From the street, the homes appear no different from any other KB Home neighborhood, but built to withstand California’s yearly wildfires.

Buyer demand for resiliency soars

The response to these homes has been overwhelmingly positive says Atalla. Dixon Trail quickly became one of KB Home’s best-selling communities in San Diego County, attracting strong buyer demand as well as national media attention. Atalla noted that homeowners also benefit directly from reduced costs, saving an average of \$3,600 annually on utility bills thanks to the homes’ all-electric, ENERGY STAR-certified design.

Annual savings are even more compelling when compared to typical monthly energy costs. Estimated monthly energy costs of a used home are typically \$344 annually while the estimated monthly energy costs at a Dixon Trail home, say KB Home, are only \$66.

“Resilience is the next big thing in homebuilding,” Atalla said. “We think that an all-electric and wildfire prepared home contributes to the resilience of our grid and our state. It also creates synergy and resilience with energy, and resilience from wildfires.”

For California homebuilders considering participation in the program, the advantage is clear that electrification and resilience are complementary, both delivering affordability, comfort, and security for homeowners.

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To learn more about the California Energy-Smart Homes Program, visit our website at [caenergysmarthomes.com](https://www.caenergysmarthomes.com) or call us at (833) 987-3935.

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