

Houston Building Maverick Chooses Premium Products for a Quality Home.

Hann Builders Adopts Use of AdvanTech® Flooring and ZIP System® Roof and Wall Sheathing.

In February 2008, Stephen Hann changed the specifications on his \$1.9 million Signature Home in The Woodlands community to AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System roof and wall sheathing even though the home was already being framed. Hann made the last-minute change after determining that AdvanTech and ZIP System products would help deliver the best possible living environment to

the future homeowners, which is the way Hann has made decisions on products and services since founding Hann Builders in 1993.



Stephen Hann
Hann Builders

For more than 20 years in the residential building industry, Hann has made many unconventional decisions about products and services that have often been questioned by traditionalists in the building community. Hann's track record, which includes being named the Greater Houston Builders Association and NAHB Custom Builder of the Year, suggests

he knows how to identify successful products. Like a number of his product decisions in the past, Hann plans to continue offering AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System roof and wall sheathing as part of preferred home-building practices in the Houston area.

"In the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a great deal of resistance to using composite siding on homes," said Hann. "In contrast, I started using composite siding after carefully weighing the value to homeowners as well as my business. Now composite siding is a common product used by builders in the area. I think the same thing will happen with AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System roof and wall sheathing. The superior performance and installation attributes of these products combined with their environmental benefits make it logical to replace plywood flooring and OSB (oriented strand board) roof and wall sheathing that have been commonplace in this market for years."

The Build

In 2002, Hann built his first home in the exclusive Carlton Woods subdivision of The Woodlands and now has more than 10 multi-million dollar custom homes in the 35-year-old community. In that same year, Hann purchased the land for his 6,800-square-foot two-story Signature Home in the Sterling Ridge subdivision of The Woodlands. Construction started early last year and progressed as planned until Stock Building Supply encouraged Hann to consider AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System roof and wall sheathing. It may have taken Hann six years to start construction on his prize home in The Woodlands, but it only took a 15-minute conversation to convince him that AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System roof and wall sheathing were the right products for this home.

"My primary concern is always product performance, so I was very interested when the guys at Stock Building Supply and Huber suggested I consider AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System sheathing," said Hann. "In addition to demonstrating the strength and moisture resistance of AdvanTech flooring, and the tight envelope created by ZIP System roof and wall sheathing, Huber's reputation in the building industry made me comfortable about using the products even though they had relatively limited penetration in the market. The house was already being framed when I met with Huber, yet I immediately made the decision to change and within three days Stock Building Supply had AdvanTech on the job site ready for installation."

Hann selected AdvanTech flooring because its bending strength and stiffness helped eliminate potential issues like squeaky, bouncy floors. Also, its moisture resistance reduced problems associated with the humidity and rain prevalent in Houston that time of year. In addition, AdvanTech flooring also delivered some installation benefits Hann was not expecting.

"I knew that we'd have no cupping, delamination, swelling or other issues caused by humidity or wet weather," said Hann. "I was completely confident AdvanTech flooring would provide a sturdy, solid floor and it did just that. However, our initial concerns that it might take longer to install than plywood because it was heavier were quickly dismissed when the framer laid more than 100 sheets in a couple of days. I quickly discovered that the extra weight kept the panels flat and rigid, making the tongue and groove installation easier and faster than plywood."

AdvanTech panels' pre-printed fastening guide and self-spacing tongue and groove features aid in fast, easy installation.



Backed by a 50-year limited warranty*, AdvanTech provides builders added confidence that the panels will perform long after the installation is complete.



ZIP System panels have built-in protective barriers and are installed like traditional structural panels.



Once panels are installed, ZIP System™ tape is applied to panel seams. Once panels are taped, the builder has rough dry-in.

The success of AdvanTech flooring reinforced Hann's choice to use ZIP System roof and wall sheathing in place of the traditional two-process systems using OSB and protected by products like house wrap or felt. ZIP System roof and wall panels each incorporate a built-in protective barrier and a seam-sealing tape which replaces the need for house wrap and felt. Because it is a different installation process, Hann was originally concerned about how his crew would adapt to the new system, which involved taping the panel seams. Despite the inexperience of Hann's framers with the ZIP System products, the installation benefits were immediately apparent to Hann on the job site.

"Tony (Huber representative, Tony Rocha) only needed a brief amount of time to provide on-the-job-site training for our framers before they were comfortable installing the panels and the ZIP System tape," said Hann. "It was easier and took less time to install than OSB with wrap. The framers really appreciated the forgiving nature of the ZIP System tape, but also understood that the tape would set in a brief period of time. The biggest installation benefits were found in the time and resources it took to complete the job. It required fewer people to install and the dry-in time was significantly faster than other wall and roof sheathing systems, so we were able to quickly get started on other areas of the home."

Getting Green

Since its development in the 1970s as a comprehensive master-planned community, The Woodlands has evolved into one of the country's "greenest" communities with nearly 6,000 acres of preserved green space including 110 parks, 165 miles of trails, numerous lakes and more than 200 species of birds. The environmental commitment of many people through the years has resulted in a number of accolades for The Woodlands including the Award of Excellence from the Urban Land Institute and the International Nations in Bloom Award.

When Hann built his first home at The Woodlands, he was a green building advocate who understood the community's passion for the outdoors and informal environmental standards. However, his environmental commitment intensified after getting certified as a Green Building Professional at the 2008 International Builders' Show, so it made perfect sense that Hann would create this Signature Home in The Woodlands to serve as a shining example to builders across Texas.

"I've always tried to incorporate environmentally friendly products into my homes, but they haven't always been practical from a performance or financial standpoint," said Hann. "While many homeowners are environmentally conscious, most won't spend significantly more money for solar panels and other pricey products to make a home greener. The purpose of this Signature Home is to show homeowners, realtors and builders that there are ways to make a home green without paying a fortune or sacrificing performance. A big part of the education is explaining that many environmentally friendly products, like AdvanTech and ZIP System products, are hidden behind walls and rarely thought of after the home is built."

Hann installed ZIP System roof and wall sheathing with the goal of improving air quality and energy efficiency that will pay dividends to all the future owners of this Signature Home. ZIP System roof and wall sheathing offers superior moisture and water resistance and significantly reduces air leaks. As a result, the homeowners can expect to save on their heating and cooling bills over the life of the home.

"My approach to building has always been generational. I want the benefits to translate over time, so that the family living in this house 50 years from now has the same or similar experience as the first family," said Hann. "I'm not going to jeopardize quality to save a few dollars, and I'm not going green to make a few dollars or to secure some certification. It's wonderful to know that using ZIP System will help to pay for itself through energy savings enjoyed by the homeowner."

Hann claims that Huber's environmental commitment at the manufacturing level was also attractive in adopting their products. All of Huber's mills are certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®), which means it promotes sustainable forestry practices through procurement programs, research initiatives as well as logger and landowner outreach. In addition, each Huber plant employs state-of-the-art environmental control equipment and maintains strict control standards to ensure that the manufacturing of Huber products has a minimal impact on the environment.

Hann recently held an open house to showcase AdvanTech flooring and ZIP System roof and wall sheathing along with the other unique features of his Signature Home in The Woodlands. He is not sure which of the features will impress the new homeowner most, but he does know that AdvanTech and ZIP System products will be standard at Hann Builders moving forward.

For more information on ZIP System roof and wall sheathing, visit zipsystem.com/tx or for AdvanTech flooring, visit advantechperforms.com/tx. You may also contact Huber's Houston representative, Tony Rocha, at tony.rocha@huber.com. For more information on Hann Builders or its Signature Home in The Woodlands, visit hannbuilt.com.

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