Special Feature 3

Eliminating Waste while Using Resources Sustainably

ECO FIRST

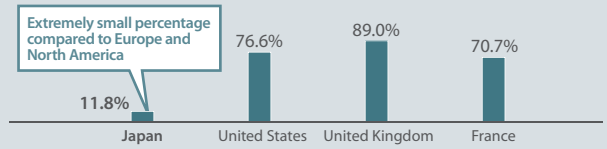
Eco-First Commitment:
Endeavor to promote resource recycling and reuse

Today, the challenge of building a sustainable recycling-oriented society has become a shared global obligation. Sekisui House, in maximizing the sustainable and responsible use of building materials, actively employs zero emission-focused initiatives aimed at resource conservation, including lengthening the lifecycles of homes and reducing waste products during the manufacturing process and at our construction sites.

Social Issues Changing Nature of Housing Inventory in Japan

Japan's housing market is unique compared to Europe and North America, as existing home inventory rarely changes hands, and comparatively newer buildings are often demolished in favor of new builds. By addressing the need for longer-lasting homes, Sekisui House is committed to helping increase housing inventory in Japan for the betterment of the environment as well as market.

International Comparison of Existing Home Sales as a Percentage of Total Home Sales

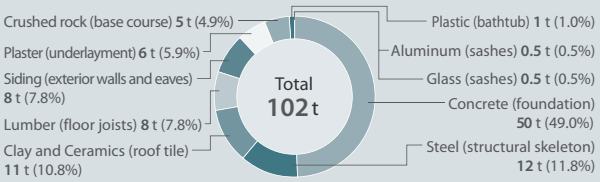


Source: 2004 White Paper on Land, Infrastructure and Transport in Japan

Social Issues Reducing Waste at Factories and Construction Sites

A single detached house uses large volumes of various natural and synthetic resources during construction. Sekisui House believes construction companies and homebuilders have a shared responsibility to reduce waste materials and encourage recycling during all phases of a home's lifecycle, from the manufacturing of components and building materials to new build construction, after-sales service, remodeling projects and demolition work.

Natural and Synthetic Resources Used in Home Construction
(per Sekisui House Steel-Framed Detached House)

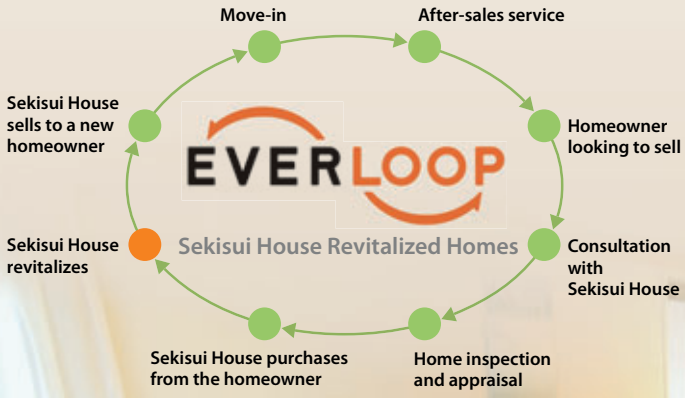


Sekisui House Initiatives

Everloop Homes ➡P34

Creating Markets for Revitalized Homes

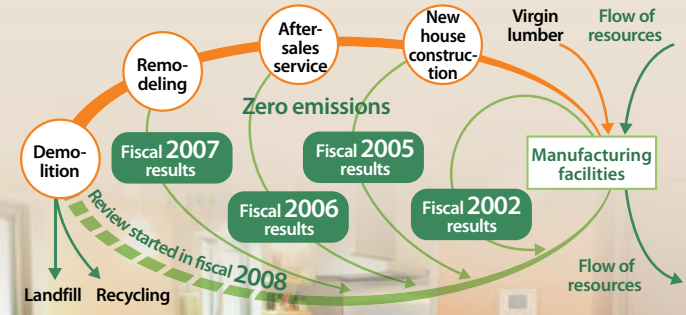
An Everloop home is an existing Sekisui House-built home bought back from the homeowner by Sekisui House, completely renovated, and then resold. The Everloop home features the same superior livability standards, insulation and earthquake resistance as our new build homes, and forms one of our key platforms in promoting recycling-oriented lifestyles in Japan.



Zero Emissions ➡P35

Recycling 100% of Factory and Construction Waste

Sekisui House has achieved zero net emissions of waste at its manufacturing facilities as well as construction sites, including new builds, after-sales service and remodeling projects. This means zero waste material is sent to landfills or processed at waste incineration plants without thermal recovery systems. We continue to actively reduce waste byproducts and sort as well as separate all waste materials to ensure 100% reuse and recycling. We are also working to achieve zero emissions at our home demolition project sites as well.



Encouraging Recycling-Oriented Lifestyles with Everloop Homes

Everloop homebuyer review

Mr. and Mrs. **Aizawa**
(Kanagawa Prefecture)

Enjoying the Superior Comfort of a New Build Built on the Existing Frame

The Aizawas were looking to purchase a home prior to their wedding, but could not find a new build that met their needs. Sekisui House stepped in to recommend an Everloop Fujisawa / Karasawa home in Kanagawa prefecture.

The home, which retains the existing 30-year old structural frame, includes all new walls, window sashes and other features, reducing the need to use new natural or synthetic resources. When looking for the first time, the Aizawas were shocked because every feature in the home was just like a new build. The home was also ideally located within a ten-minute drive from their respective workplaces, but perhaps more importantly was the home's close proximity to the beach, as Mr. Aizawa is an avid beach tennis player. The standard new build features and 10-year manufacturer's warranty helped seal the deal, with the Aizawas purchasing the home two weeks after the first showing.

The Aizawas point out, "Our parents and friends love our new house and visit quite often. Once the benefits are more widely known, we expect more and more young couples our age to seriously consider the revitalized home option." Next on the Aizawas' agenda is to install a PV system for their new home.

Pre-revitalization

Gutted leaving foundation and structural skeleton

Plumbing installation

Post-revitalization

Sustainability in Action

Revitalized Homes Benefit Greater Society

Naoki Sato (left),
Technology Head
Hiroyuki Sato (right),
Sales Planning
House Purchase & Resale Department
Tokyo Office

We were looking to design the Everloop Fujisawa / Karasawa home to target first-time homebuyers.

Using a bright and open floor plan, the living room, entryway hall and staircase are divided using a moveable room divider, rather than doorways, which allows the floor plan to be adjusted to different lifestyle patterns. We were happy to see the needs of the new homeowner match perfectly with this unique concept.

The home, located in a subdivision previously developed by Sekisui House, is surrounded by homes that are over 30 years old. We hope the surrounding community will feel more rejuvenated at the sight of the home as well as become motivated to remodel their own homes.

An Everloop home offers many benefits for the previous homeowner, including the fact their beloved home will live on intact, the home sale process is carefree and the move out date is negotiable.

We look forward to pioneering the market for revitalized homes precisely because of the many benefits offered to the homebuyer, the neighborhood, the seller, the environment, as well as society as a whole.

A completely transformed bright and airy living, dining and kitchen space.

Looking Ahead: Offering Enhanced Eco-Friendly Features for Revitalized Homes

Sales of Everloop homes have posted an upward trajectory since going on sale in 2007, while homeowner feedback has also been consistently positive.

Over 95% of participants in an after-sales survey of Everloop homeowners responded that they were fully satisfied with their home. The survey also showed most homebuyers purchased an Everloop home after considering a new build.

Based on their comfortable living standard and contribution to increasing housing inventory, Everloop homes have been selected as a Quality, Long-term Sustainable Housing Leading Model Project by the government of Japan.

Sekisui House plans to begin introducing new more eco-friendly Everloop models as a means to spur market demand going forward.

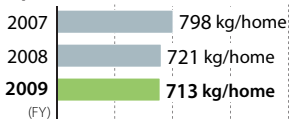
The Next Step in Zero Emission Initiatives —Resource Recycling and Reuse

Cutting the Amount of Manufacturing and Construction Waste

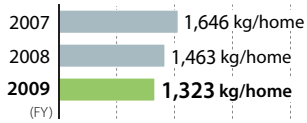
Sekisui House achieved zero net emissions at its manufacturing factories in 2002. Later in 2004, we were the first in the construction industry to acquire multi-regional certification under the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law, which allowed us to achieve zero emissions in our new build sites, after-sales service and remodeling projects as well as a 100% rate of waste recycling leading up to 2007. Since then, we have shifted efforts to reducing the volume of waste.

In fiscal 2009, the per home volume of waste byproducts totaled 713kg at our manufacturing facilities and 1,323kg at our new build construction sites. Going forward we will continue efforts to reduce natural and synthetic resource waste to a minimum.

Factory Waste Generation per House



New Build Construction Site Waste



* Multi-regional certification represents a special exemption designated by the Minster of the Environment of Japan to companies that have established systems for the collection and recycling of waste products effectively easing restrictions under the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law. Multi-regional Certification also allows companies to bypass the approval process of individual local governments required for the transport of waste products across multiple prefectures.

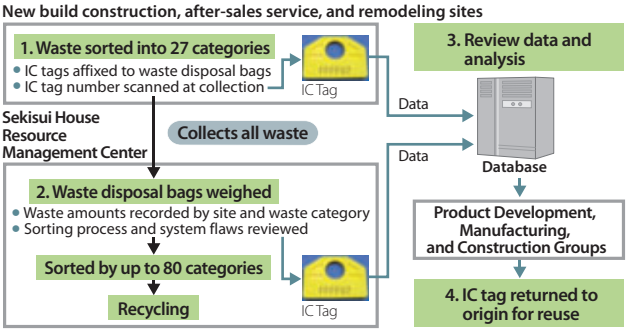
Advancing Recycling with IC Tags Next-Generation Zero Emissions System

Sekisui House began trials of its IC tag-based next-generation zero emissions system at new build construction sites in January 2007. The system collects, analyzes and evaluates the volume of construction waste by using IC tags affixed to waste disposal bags that are sorted into 27 categories. The system allows us to share individual house data between our product development, product design and manufacturing groups as well as our construction sites, encouraging better recycling practices and improving traceability during the waste disposal process.

During fiscal 2010, we plan to move ahead with necessary data analysis and infrastructure improvements to launch the system nationwide in November 2010.

Scanning an IC tag

Next-Generation Zero Emissions System Overview

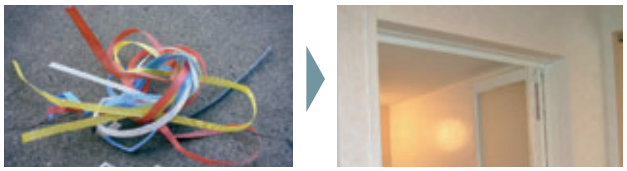


Developing and Utilizing a Mix of Recycled Products

Sekisui House recycles 100% of waste heat and materials from its production facilities and construction sites. In fiscal 2009, we recycled 82.8% of all materials, which are reused in a variety of different applications and products.

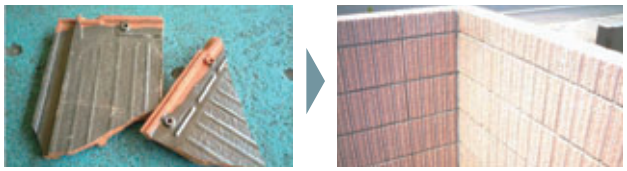
Example Applications for Recyclables

Construction Waste	Application



Waste packaging used in the shower-room doorframe of Sha-Maison low-rise apartments

Wood waste recycled into decking material



Broken roof tiles used to make exterior concrete fencing

Sustainability in Action

Recycling Plasterboard Waste into Field Chalk

Hirotsugu Mishina
Production Line Technology Department
Kanto Factory

The largest source of construction waste at new build sites is plasterboard, as the amount collected at our Kanto Factory alone totals 4,000 tons annually. Although several years were spent studying potential recycling methods, the disposal and processing of all plasterboard waste had to previously be consigned to our supplier.

Later, however, it was discovered that a mixture of crushed plasterboard waste and egg shells offered a viable alternative to field chalk. As a result, the Resource Management Center will begin manufacturing a proprietary blend of field chalk starting in spring 2010. We expect this product to be used widely at sports fields throughout Japan in the near future.

Platama powder field chalk

Zero Emissions Center Offers Public Viewing of Our Construction Waste Recycling Process

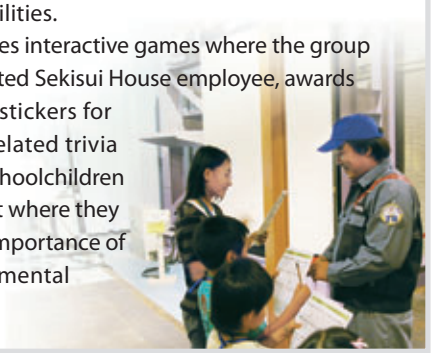
The Zero Emissions Center located at the Sekisui House Kanto Factory educates visitors about various environmental technologies for the home. Since the Center opened to the public in November 2008, a total of 32,160 patrons have visited, with 9,413 also visiting the Resource Management Center where they can view construction waste sorting as well as the volume reduction, crushing and separated into around 80 categories. In this sense, the Center also acts as a key platform educating the public on our recycling efforts.

Resource Management Center

Recycling Education Programs

Sekisui House offers educational outreach programs on recycling that invite schoolchildren of all ages to visit and tour its production facilities.

The program features interactive games where the group leader, a carefully selected Sekisui House employee, awards students with unique stickers for answering recycling related trivia questions, providing schoolchildren with a fun environment where they learn more about the importance of recycling and environmental protection.



Taking the Next Step in Zero Emission Remodeling

Sekisui House has established separate internal disposal standards and criteria governing construction waste originating from the demolition phase and installation phase of remodeling projects. As is the case with new build homes, the Resource Management Center collects and recycles all construction waste from remodeling sites.

Complex waste products, such as tatami mats, window sashes or appliances, disposed of during the demolition phase are dismantled into manageable sizes prior to recycling.

Taking apart *tatami* mats

Ensuring Appropriate Disposal Practices during Demolition Work

Sekisui House consigns the disposal and processing of construction waste from demolition work to a selection of carefully screened intermediate disposal partners. However, we feel there is also a need to establish an added level of accountability in the form of a system to verify that our partners dispose of demolition waste properly.

As a result, we are currently developing our own internal evaluation system for our intermediate disposal partners that also reviews their potential for compliance with our strict zero emission standards.

Looking Ahead: Advancing Zero Emission Activities Further

Sekisui House is firmly committed to maintaining its zero emission policy for manufacturing, construction site, after-sales service and remodeling project related waste. Our goal is to increase the material recycling rate to 90% and further improve waste traceability and volume management through our new IC tag-based zero emission system.

In addition, we will continue to work toward achieving zero emissions at our demolition sites as well.

Teruo Takahashi PhD

Honorary Professor
Waseda University

Dr. Takahashi's research focuses on system design methodologies including the design of factory business models and logistics. His recent research focuses on aligning on-site competencies with management strategy to better guide self-governing systems.

External Stakeholder's Perspective

The Importance of People in Environmental Protection

When I was a child, I once took a wood scrap from a construction site and tried to use it for my shop class homework. At the same time, though, I gazed at the piece of wood and thought, "what a waste."

I believe the Sekisui House Resource Management Center represents a viable attempt to collect and reuse construction waste systematically. The very process of converting construction waste into reusable products, though, is a major leap forward, indeed. People at the Center clearly understand their role, and are driven to sort and separate. They handle a broad mix of waste products, which makes it difficult to automate and requires a human touch, illustrating the Center is not viable without its workers. This underscores the importance of people working together with pride toward the common goal of preserving a sound environment for future generations. In this sense, I hope the Center can become a model for the rest of the world going forward.

Special Feature 4

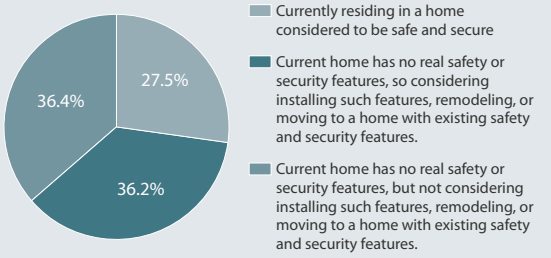
Focused on Quality and Longevity

The most important role of a home is the protection of a homeowner's life and assets. Sekisui House implements strict quality control practices in each stage of the homebuilding process, from the manufacturing of building materials to construction and after-sale services, to fulfill its commitment to provide customers with a comfortable home that will be enjoyed for generations.

Social Issues Strong Demand for High Quality, Safe and Secure Homebuilding

Homeowners are becoming more aware of the importance of a safe and secure home, and with the Law Concerning the Promotion of Long-term Quality Housing taking effect on June 4, 2009, which encourages building longer-life homes that retain value and quality, industry and social trends are quickly moving in the direction of increasing housing stock and promoting homes that are more durable. As the top homebuilder in Japan, Sekisui House will continue to exert its best efforts in improving home quality to meet these challenges going forward.

Survey on Safe and Secure Housing



Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism "Study on Consumer Feelings toward Diversification in Housing"

Sekisui House initiatives

Delivering Safe and Secure Homes Without Sacrificing Comfort

- Well-built shelter protecting family and property
- Total homeowner support system in place
- Healthy lifestyle in high quality living space

Comfort
Comfortable living —now and always

3 Homeowner Benefits

- Quality home that reduces costs and will last for generations
- Reduced gas and electricity costs courtesy of eco-friendly features

Economy
Economical lifestyle

Eco-friendly
Living in harmony with nature

Green First
Sekisui House—Green First

- Home design and manufacturing stages actively reduce CO_2 emissions
- Landscaping that collectively attempts to revitalize the local ecosystem
- Strict recycling-focused manufacturing process that uses resources effectively

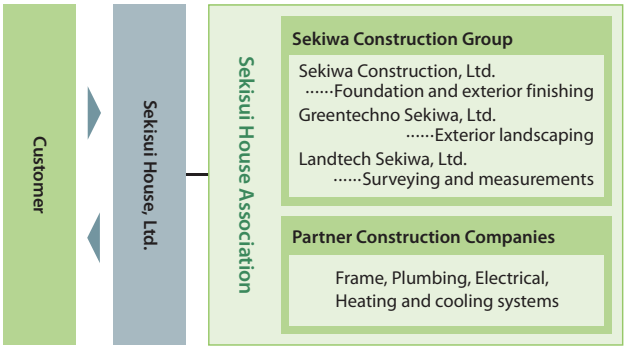
Quality Control System Covering All Phases of the Homebuilding Process

Providing Peace of Mind with Process-Wide Accountability

A high quality home cannot be constructed with flaws in onsite construction quality, no matter how superior the construction materials.

In order to ensure the highest possible quality in construction, Sekisui House created the Sekisui House Association, which consists of wholly owned group company Sekiwa Construction (31 companies) and other carefully screened partner construction companies. All phases of construction are implemented under a centralized framework of responsibility, with strict guidelines stipulated in a complete project manual, which allows us to further enhance quality assurance throughout the entire project.

Sekisui House Project Accountability System

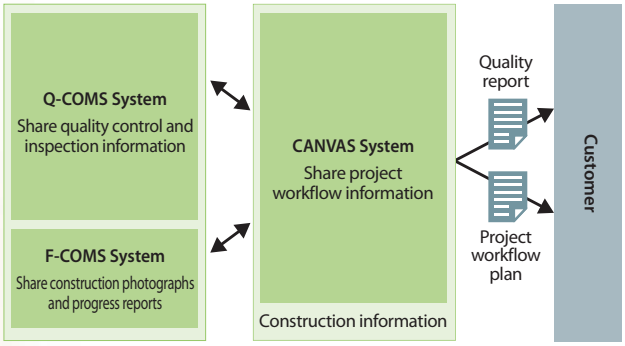


Uniform Company-Wide Quality Control System

Sekisui House centrally manages site inspection records, construction management reports and other relevant data using its internal IT system. By linking quality control information with photographs and construction drawings to encourage visualization (identifying problems to bring them to the forefront), Sekisui House is able to both oversee construction quality for the entire company and improve internal controls.

The Sekisui House quality control system is also used to generate the project workflow plan provided to customers and quality report with photographs, fulfilling its duty of accountability as well as improving customer trust.

Quality Control System Overview



Sustainability in Action

Our Quality Control System Has Brought Me Closer to the Customer

Masakazu Okawa
Deputy Chief Manager
Kagawa Branch

The Kagawa Branch first began using the company-wide construction quality control system in 2008. Previously we had focused on explaining about the high precision of our construction, but the information we can now provide using the system has truly brought us closer to the customer.

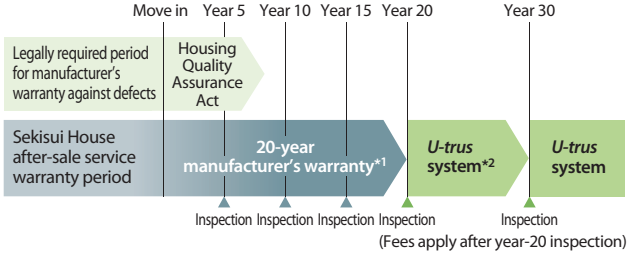
With the system in place, I also feel more aware of quality and our responsibility to the customer, as I am now visiting our construction sites regularly to take photographs for the quality report. Naturally, this also means I have the chance to develop closer working relationships with our customers. The results speak for themselves, as the level of customer satisfaction is very high, and I know our efforts have improved our service competencies and relationship with the customer.

After-Sale Services that Ensure Longevity and Durability

Sekisui House has 65 customer centers positioned throughout Japan that employ expert staff who address home maintenance-related inquiries. We also provide a 20-year manufacturer's warranty against defects,*1 or twice the required term under current law. After 20 years, the warranty can be extended for additional 10-year intervals provided the required inspections and maintenance schedule is completed at the homeowner's expense. (*U-trus* system).*2

Homeowner data is centrally managed in our IT system, which enables us to generate a detailed house history report that includes design, regular inspections, home and fixture maintenance schedule as well as replacement schedule. This data is also used when remodeling, allowing us to market tailored solutions that also address changes in homeowner lifestyle.*3

20-year manufacturer's warranty and the U-trus system



*1 20-year manufacturer's warranty applies to structural, frame and rainwater-proofing components. Requires free inspection and regular maintenance and repairs be made in year 10 at the homeowner's expense.

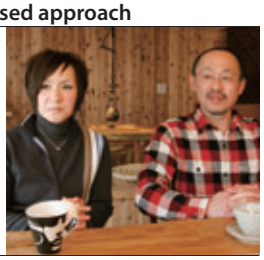
*2 *U-trus* system provides extended manufacturer's warranty at 10-year intervals after the initial warranty expiration if the required inspection as well as maintenance and repairs are completed at the homeowner's expense.

*3 Applicable to detached houses ordered after May 1, 2009.

Tailored Solutions Aligned to Customer Lifestyle

Example of consulting-based approach

Mr. and Mrs. Itoh
(Shiga Prefecture)



Improving Homeowner Accessibility through Organic Innovations

"I want to make my home more comfortable, welcoming and wheelchair accessible for my wife." With this request in mind, the Sekisui House sales and design teams came up with several possible solutions, devoting an entire year to finding the best design for the Itohs' needs.

First, a total remodeling of the home's entryway was in order. Previously, Mrs. Itoh needed separate wheelchairs for accessing her home from the garage and in-door use. The design team decided to divide the existing sliding entryway door in the garage into a wheelchair accessible doorway and normal doorway. Today, Mrs. Itoh can now access and use her home directly from her car using a single wheelchair. The team also positioned the mailbox lower, allowing her to check the mail without leaving the home.

The design of the bathroom also needed to be addressed. The individual in charge of design visited the Itohs' house to measure the bathroom area, and discuss their exact needs, with the result a separate entryway for husband and wife, enabling easy access for both.

As for the interior, the Itohs wanted their home to match a natural wood dining table they saw at a furniture store, so the team proposed a design that used all natural wood beams. Extremely satisfied with the result, they stated, "our house has been completely transformed, and we now feel comfortable inviting friends over."

Nearly a year after moving into their new home, the Itohs provided additional positive feedback saying "the many design proposals and simulations yielded truly amazing results, enhancing the comfort level of our home tremendously." The Itohs also noted that "if any issue happens to arise, we have the peace of mind that we can take advantage of Sekisui Home's great after-sale service program."

With its all natural wood beams, the living room has become a place for the Itohs to relax and unwind.

With the garage entryway sliding door divided by use, Mrs. Itoh can access the home from her car with a single wheelchair.

Sustainability in Action

Comfortable Housing Aligned to Homeowner Needs

Hiroyuki Miyagawa
Real Estate Sales Store, Kyoto Branch

The Itohs had shopped around for a homebuilder, so I decided to focus on our noted high-strength steel-framed structure and easy-to-maintain schedule for exterior walls. I also shared my experience in universal design housing. Based on this and previous discussions, the Itohs chose Sekisui House for their remodeling project.

Design staff with expertise in universal design homes reviewed the project from a variety of angles to arrive at the ideal solution, with the width of hallways as well as position of light switches and electrical outlets adjusted by the centimeter. This consulting-based approach is necessary to construct a safe, secure and comfortable home. Going forward, I hope to apply this experience to develop the ideal solution for other homeowners.

An in-door sunroom constructed in place of the deck includes a floor flush with the house, allowing for easy wheelchair access.

Launch of Chemicare Home Line

In 1990, Sekisui House began addressing the issue of formaldehyde exposure in homes. In 2007, Sekisui House introduced the chemical substance emission standards for construction materials (Chemicare Standard) for measuring chemical diffusion in building materials. We have also made efforts to reduce chemical exposure levels in our homes based on our own set of guidelines for chemical substances. The Chemicare line of homes, which went on sale in November 2009, features building materials with lower risk of chemical-dispersal and that absorb formaldehyde as well as proprietary ventilation systems that improve overall airflow. In addition, other features that improve air quality include pollen-proofing solutions and plasma cluster air purifiers.


Pollen-dispersing air shower

Grading Chemicare building materials

Sekisui House was awarded a Kids Design Award 2009 in the Construction and Spatial Design Category by the Kids Design Association, marking the third consecutive year since 2007 we have received this award. See below for a selection of our winning designs.

Functional Children's Spaces

Movable wall partitions and storage solutions that enable simple and easy floor plan alterations to match the changing needs of growing children.


Child-proof Sliding Door

Child-proof sliding doors that prevent finger injuries are now installed standard on all new detached houses.

Mobile Device-Linked Home Operating System

Mobile devices can be used in place of a traditional key to open the front door, operate lighting and air conditioning, and provide photo confirmation of a visitor at the front door.

Solutions for Dual-Income Families

Sekisui House has launched a new line of housing targeting the growing number of dual-income families.

Using the results of a survey on dual-family households, ideas on spatial design and home features were systemized into five core categories: efficient laundry spaces, concealable kitchens, a home that works when the family is away (self-ventilates, generates electricity, etc.), separate sanctuaries for husband and wife, and café-like spaces. Utilizing these categories, we are working to build comfortable, safe and secure homes for dual-income families that serve to bring the family closer, yet also provide separate spatial retreats.

Looking Ahead: People-First Homebuilding

Today homebuyers are looking for more than just earthquake or wind-proofing construction or the right number of rooms or features in a home. With aging populations in Japan and other developed nations, demand is expected to grow substantially for durable homes that are comfortable for family members of all ages and that carry a strong manufacturer's customer support system. In addressing the declining birthrate and increasing elderly population, tailored solutions for multigenerational households will represent a key homebuilding segment in the years to come. As a result, Sekisui House will continue its commitment to focus on people-first homebuilding going forward.

Kiyonori Miisho

President, Architectural Laboratory for Systems Environment Development Co., Ltd.
Honorary Professor, Shibaura Institute of Technology

Mr. Miisho is a specialist in urban planning focused on construction and construction method research.

External stakeholders' perspective

Creating the framework for easy maintenance and housing longevity

Finally the time has come for homes that are built specifically for multigenerational households. For example, a home that can be passed down from parents to children to grandchildren; or a 60-year old home that is so appealing that it makes the owner want to hand it down to future generations of his or her family. Legislation has even been passed to this effect that encourages long-term quality housing.

These homes will require a strong and well-built foundation and frame as well as carefree maintenance and replacement schedule for appliances and fixtures in the bathroom, kitchen and heating and cooling units. These homes will also require standard maintenance as well a detailed house history for the peace of mind of the future homeowner. Sekisui House has implemented a company-wide construction quality control system and home history record-keeping program that allows design drawings and other data to be centrally managed, which has positioned the company to play a major role in improving the future housing stock situation as a leader of Japan's homebuilding industry.

Special Feature 5

Building Vibrant and Enriching Communities

ECO FIRST+
Actively promoting ecological networks and biodiversity revitalization

In 2005, Sekisui House introduced an Urban Development Charter in order to fulfill its social responsibilities to build towns that successive generations can call their home. The idea of town beautification encompasses homes whose attraction only increases with the passing of time. Sekisui House is tackling the challenge of nurturing communities that build bonds between kin, with community, and through shared interests. We are committed to building towns that transcend generations, and that grow and mature together with the residents who live there.

Social Issues Building Towns-Creating Living Environments Beyond Individual Homes

The emergence of the nuclear family and declining birthrates combined with an aging population are today weakening the bonds between residents. This is creating greater challenges for communities, in areas ranging from improvement of public safety and disaster planning to support for the elderly and disabled, and children's safety and the environment. Sekisui House is working closely with communities to build towns based on the idea of fostering local communities that address these issues. Our goal is to contribute to building a positive society for future generations to inherit.

Major Issues Facing Communities

Source: Survey report on rebuilding and creating communities in metropolitan areas, released by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

Sekisui House initiatives

Building towns for future generations

Sekisui House Urban Development Charter

Our sincere wish is to preserve nature and the environment, while nurturing local cultures and communities, helping to stimulate local economies, and protecting the asset value of neighborhoods, so that people are able to live comfortable and secure lifestyles. As a socially responsible corporate citizen, Sekisui House is committed to contributing to the creation of a sustainable society through town development, based on the belief that the living environment of our home and town serves as the foundation of our lives as human beings.

Basic Principles of Town Development

Environmental Management (Consider the environment)
- Reduce environmental impact
- Conserve and foster nature
  - Use resources efficiently
  - Energy saving and energy generation
  - Reduce the use of harmful substances
  - Conserve and foster local ecosystems
  - Use the local natural environment

Livelihood Management (Protect livelihoods)
- Enable people to live in security and with peace of mind
- Enrich people's lives
  - Incorporate disaster prevention planning
  - Incorporate universal design principles
  - Consider health factors
  - Support multi-generation dwellings
  - Support diverse lifestyles
  - Enable people to live functional lives

Economic Management (Enhance value)
- Maintain and enhance asset value
- Revitalize local economies
- Manage costs appropriately
  - Cost management from a long-term perspective
  - Balanced management of costs and value
  - Build sustainable local economies
  - Use local resources

Town Management (Build communities)
- Perpetuate and develop local culture
- Build communities
  - Create attractive landscapes
  - Integration with surrounding areas
  - Perpetuate and develop local design
  - Maintain and build communities
  - Consideration for surrounding communities
  - Support and facilitate change of residences
  - Adapt to the times
  - Create and maintain town branding

Community Visit Day

Each spring and fall, Sekisui House conducts a nationwide campaign to promote its residential developments that feature appealing landscaping and environmental planning consistent with our Urban Development Charter. Among the features we promote are the *Gohon no ki* landscaping concept and our certified environmentally symbiotic house. We are committed to building quality residential developments that have a positive social impact and establish a town character or branding.

Assisting the Growth of the Community Over the Long Term

Communication is everywhere, as a resident stops to chat with children on their way to school

President of Skyrail Town Midorizaka Neighborhood Association

Katsushi Takaguchi
(Hiroshima Prefecture)

Sky Rail Town Midorizaka—Building an Enriching Community with Town Spirit

1997: Start of Subdivision Development

Building the foundations for a community boasting Japan's first Skyrail.

The community of Skyrail Town Midorizaka is located high among the hills of Hiroshima. Construction of the subdivision development began in 1997. One of the major characteristics of the town has been its active development of new infrastructure, notably with the integration of Japan's first Skyrail suspended monorail system as part of the public transportation network, and the launch of a website for residents connected by optical fiber. The website provides a forum for residents to share information, and also streams images from Web cameras located on school routes to prevent crime.

Web cameras are placed throughout the community to help prevent crime

Sekisui House has actively sought to open lines of communication in this community. Our employees participate in events with residents who have moved here, and we have organized open houses for residents to provide feedback. Today, almost every household is a member of the Skyrail Town Midorizaka neighborhood association, which plays a central role in organizing community events.

"The association was formed about 12 years ago, with the idea of building the kind of community where residents are always happy to greet each other," says Katsushi Takaguchi, who is the second president of the neighborhood association. "My wife says that she has met many of our neighbors by participating in events such as the summer festival organized by our association and the Christmas wreath-making workshop organized by Sekisui House."

Entrance to the Skyrail Town Midorizaka

Blending in with the rich natural surroundings

2005–Present

Residents work to attract stores and encourage the building of schools, as wish turns to reality.

As president of the neighborhood association, Takaguchi helps organize numerous events to encourage interaction between residents. He is also active in ensuring that the community has the necessary infrastructure, such as working to attract a supermarket, or encouraging the building of a preschool and elementary school to meet the needs of the growing number of young families in the community. Sekisui House also lent a helping hand to the neighborhood association, in lobbying the municipal government to secure land and property for needed infrastructure.

His efforts paid off when a new preschool was opened in October 2005, followed by a new supermarket in December 2006. In addition, the municipal government decided to open a new elementary school in April 2011. Takaguchi has already set his sights on building an assembly hall for residents living within the boundaries of the new school. "After the assembly hall opens, we will use it to pass on Hiroshima's cultural traditions and encourage greater interaction across multiple generations."

Winter festival organized by the neighborhood association

Preschool built to support the growing community

Supermarket that the neighborhood association worked to attract

Takaguchi and a Sekisui House employee discuss plans to enhance the community

Takaguchi also wants to see the new school named "Midorizaka School" after the name of the town. "At last year's summer festival, we had a great time singing and dancing to the Midorizaka Ondo dance that the residents created. If more people develop an attachment to the name 'Midorizaka' and our town, it will unite our town spirit even more."

Sekisui House will continue to assist in building communities where residents understand one another and feel thankful to be living in a great community.

Sustainability in Action

Serving as a Link Between Residents and Sekisui House

Shinji Sakuma
President
Sky Rail Service Co., Ltd.*

When I worked for Sekisui House, I was involved in planning for the development of Midorizaka, in collaboration with the neighborhood association. In 2008, I started working for Sky Rail Service, but one thing has remained unchanged. That is my wish for Midorizaka to be the kind of community in which the children who grow up here can be proud to call it their hometown.

As president of the Sky Rail Service, I get to interact with our users and listen to their needs. I will continue to do my part for the development of Midorizaka, serving as a link between the residents and Sekisui House.

* Sky Rail Service Co., Ltd. is a subsidiary of Sekisui House that operates the Skyrail Midorizaka Line running between JR Seno Station and Skyrail Town Midorizaka.

Assisting Growth to Build a Community for Generations to Come

Tsutomu Sasai
General Manager of Planning, Hiroshima Branch

The Hiroshima Branch of Sekisui House and Sky Rail Service Co., Ltd. meet monthly, and through our discussions and from witnessing the day-to-day growth of the community, I have come to understand that town development is a continual and ongoing process.

As a planner, my job is to create a vision of this town for future generations, by listening closely to the residents. It is my job to assist the growth of the community, so that the children of Midorizaka will grow up and hopefully decide that they want to raise their own children here.

Common City Hoshida Residents Spearhead Town Improvements

Common City Hoshida is a residential subdivision in Osaka. The first residents moved here in 1991, and within three years formed a building code management committee. The committee engages in public relations activities and activities for beautification of the environment. In recognition of the committee's efforts to enhance living conditions for residents, the committee received the Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Minister's Award in 2005, under the Urban Planning Design Contest.

In 2009, the residents formed a new committee with the aim of addressing issues relating to the aging population and demand for home remodeling.

A neighborhood of Common City Hoshida

Kids Design Award Received for Community Security Plan

Refre Misaki Nozomizaka is a major residential subdivision in Osaka that began construction in 2002. The subdivision recently had the distinction of receiving the Kids Design Award 2009 in recognition of its community security initiatives. The town development incorporates security measures that revolve around home, town and community, in order to keep children safe.

The measures include patrols by security staff on duty 24/7, and the use of Web cameras installed at parks and other locations. The cameras stream images accessible to residents on their home computers. These measures provide a constant watch over children, earning the subdivision special distinction for its community security.

Security personnel ensure that children are safe on their walk to school

A neighborhood in the Refre Misaki Nozomizaka subdivision

Looking Ahead: Neighbors Day* Helps Build Bonds Among Residents

Sekisui House envisions local communities as collections of residents who, as members of their towns, take an active interest in creating a better place to live.

In fiscal 2009, we organized Neighbors Days for the first time at a number of our residential developments, in an effort to build community spirit. In fiscal 2010, we plan to add more activities that help build towns that residents can be proud to call their home.

* Neighbors Day (La Fête des Voisins) was started by French citizens in 1999, as a way for neighbors or co-workers to get together to enjoy food and drinks brought by participants.

Town Development Across Japan

Haibara Hinokizaka (Nara)—Community-Maintained Park Enhances Traditional Community

The Hinokizaka neighborhood features generous use of natural brick and cypress coniferous trees, which are designed to make the town grow more attractive with time. The neighborhood also features a park that incorporates the site of an ancient burial mound. This park is entirely maintained through the volunteer efforts of the community.

Common City Funabashi (Chiba)—Residents' Landscaping Maintenance Sets Example for Other Communities to Follow

This residential development was created with a master landscaping plan in place. Over the last 25 years, the residents have continued to maintain the landscaping through organized maintenance, whereby residents volunteer their time to prune and weed.

The landscaping has grown considerably today, lending the community an even more vibrant appearance. Common City Funabashi is setting an example for other communities to follow in achieving beautification over time, having created a warm community through the initiative shown by residents to maintain their town.

Building Communication Among Residents

Sun Disk Younandai (Shimane)

Sekisui House organizes various events for residents, such as barbeques at Biotope Park, Christmas parties and tree-planting events.

Common Stage Sumiyoshinomori (Nagasaki)

Sekisui House organized a Neighbors Day for residents to gather and share drinks and food, helping to encourage communication among neighbors.

Common Garden Nakamachidai (Kanagawa)

Sekisui House organized a gardening committee for residents to jointly maintain and manage community landscaping. Members gather in each other's yards to learn planting and pruning techniques.

Preserving the Character of Neighborhoods

Common Square Minami Osawa (Kyoto)

A walkway splits the north and south areas of the development, providing open light and space for the community to gather. The pedestrian-only walkway is closed to vehicle traffic.

Park Place Oita (Oita)

The subdivision layout and landscaping were designed to integrate with the surrounding environment, offering many broad expanses.

ANDANTE (Saitama)

The child- and pet-friendly Sha-Maison apartment complex incorporates an exterior design plan, for the seven buildings and 30 rental units in the development.

Grande Maison Higashitotsuka (Kanagawa)

This award-winning* condominium development is known for its integration with the surrounding environment and biodiversity measures, with the aim of encouraging coexistence between residents, town, and nature.

* Received the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Award in the 29th Green City Awards organized by the Urban Green Space Development Foundation.

Dr. Hiroko Saito

Professor of Real Estate Studies
Meikai University

Dr. Saito specializes in design and management for living environments such as detached houses and condominiums. She is involved in residential land assessment in Japan and abroad.

External stakeholder's perspective

Importance of Framework to Assist Residents' Efforts to Care for Their Towns

There are three elements to the ideal town. The first element is caring what others think. When you see a town that looks attractive, it is because the neighbors are considerate of each other. Neighborhoods that are attractively designed inspire pride and attachment to the neighborhood, which in turn makes residents want to improve their neighborhood. The second element is interaction. Towns that are enjoyable to live in have infrastructure for people to interact, share in enjoyment, help each other out, and live with peace of mind. It is important to have appealing common areas and community facilities, and have organized events. The third element is learning from each other. The essence of a community is to function as a place for people to learn from each other. In order for towns to mature, the people living there must also grow by tackling local issues.

Towns revolve around their residents. However, once the residents have moved in, it is difficult to integrate attractive designs, together with appealing facilities and spaces and a management framework. It is also difficult for the residents themselves to manage these things on their own. That is why it is important to have the infrastructure in place from the beginning, and why it will be of increasing importance for developers to assist residents in their efforts to take care of their towns. I hope to see the development of more towns that are full of caring.