

Coming Soon to a Home Near You

[Bob Feeman](#)

It's often said there's nothing new under the sun. We beg to differ. The Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH) recently identified innovative technologies that are about to make our homes stronger, more durable and more resource-efficient.

Three innovative technologies on PATH's list, caught our eye. All three of these technologies are available now, though they might not have yet made it into your home. But we guarantee they're coming soon to a home near you.

1. All-in-one washer and dryer units. Also known as washer-dryer combination units or horizontal axis washer/dryers, these appliances save space, time and resources by combining the functions of a washer and dryer into a single front-loading unit. Popular in Europe, where space is at a premium, these combo machines are just starting to make their way into American homes. Put your clothes in, press the start button and the units automatically switch from washing to drying cycles. A typical unit has a high-speed spin cycle and a drying pre-heat function to improve efficiency.

2. Vertical ICFs. Typically, insulating concrete forms (ICFs) are installed horizontally, usually as hollow foam blocks or foam planks. The foam provides insulating properties while the concrete, poured on site between the foam skins, provides structural integrity. Vertical ICF panels are generally 12 inches wide and 8 feet tall, though they can be ordered in any height, and install with vertical I-beam studs to create uniform, insulated below- or above-ground walls. The vertical ICFs install quickly, with no need for gluing, taping or tying the components together.

3. Self-cleaning impact-resistant windows. Call them the ultimate windows. Not only are they resistant to impact by flying debris during hurricanes and tornadoes, but they also include a glass coating that sheds water (known as a hydrophilic coating), which prevents spotting and dirt accumulation. Add solar-control glass, which restricts the amount of damaging infrared rays that can enter the home, and you have something truly innovative. For more information on these and other home-related technologies, visit PATH's website at www.pathnet.org.

This article is compliments of Smart HomeOwner Magazine, the Presenting Sponsor of our 2008 *Smart Home Owner Seminar Series* taking place throughout the weekend. Bob Feeman is the editor of Smart HomeOwner Magazine. He can be reached at bfeeman@smarthomeownermag.com