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## Exclusive: Houston-area homebuilder building luxury battery-powered home

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One of the homebuilders behind Bluejack National is building what is believed to be the first luxury battery-powered home in Houston.

The Woodlands-based Tipler Group has partnered with Grapevine, Texas-based PanTech Design on the project, which will deploy PanTech's proprietary Adapt Energy technology to use an on-site battery to manage and automate the home's energy usage. The battery is manufactured by Germany-based Sonnen ecoLinx.

**Click through the slideshow above for a look at how the battery-powered home will work.**



TIPLER GROUP

The new battery-powered home is being built as a show home to demonstrate the technology, said Tipler Group CEO [Justin Tipler](#). Customers who hire Tipler Group to build a home will be able to install the system on their own property.

Tipler Group specializes in building luxury homes in resort-style, master-planned communities like Bluejack National, where it is a homebuilding partner. Located in Montgomery northeast of Houston, Bluejack National is [the award-winning master-planned community that is home to a golf course designed by pro golfer Tiger Woods](#).

Locally, Tipler Group has also built homes at Carlton Woods, a community within The Woodlands, and Woodforest, a master-planned community in Montgomery.

The battery-powered show home will be in Woodforest's Pine Island neighborhood, located north of Woodforest Golf Club. The 4,000-square-foot home is scheduled to be delivered in April.

The system implemented in the show home will draw power from the energy grid to charge the home's battery, which, in turn, powers the home. But because the Adapt Energy software manages how and when the battery is charged, customers will reap the benefit of only drawing power from the grid at off-peak times, saving money in the process, Tipler said.

The system also sends out severe weather alerts, creates schedules and power profiles based off usage, and simultaneously prepares for power outages with the ability to operate off the grid.

The show home also will be outfitted with solar panels, providing an additional low-cost way to charge the battery.

The batteries used in the system are about 22.5 cubic feet in size — about the size of a refrigerator — and are typically installed in the garage of a home, Tipler said.

"The battery technology and the solar technology have both been around for a few years. But the Adapt system really pulls it all together in a way that is easy for homeowners to manage their energy usage, saving a lot of money," Tipler said.

The show home being built at Woodforest will be one of just a handful in Texas and the first in Houston to use PanTech's software, Tipler said.

Tipler said it costs about \$40,000 to install the technology, which can be done at either the time a home is built or at a later date as a retrofit. He added that the system can often recover enough savings to offset the installation costs within three to four years.

The system is capable of removing a home from the power grid for up to six hours a day during peak usage times. It can then recharge overnight, Tipler said.

Tipler has already been speaking with homeowners about including the technology in their own homes.

"We've found that the appeal is different in Houston than it is in Austin," Tipler said. "In Austin, homeowners are all about getting off the grid as much as possible. But in Houston, the big selling point is energy security."

Tipler said the ability to maintain power during severe weather events is especially attractive in a place like Houston, which has seen the power grid go down in large parts of the area following major storms like Hurricane Harvey.

The Adapt Energy software can be incorporated into other home automation systems, which can ultimately provide another way to save customers money.

While home automation systems are not typically eligible for tax credits, systems that control energy usage can be. Tipler said that means if customers opt to install the battery system, other related home automation technologies potentially can be "rolled into" the tax credits.

"This is by far the most exciting innovation for a home that I have seen in the 12 years we've been in business," Tipler said.

**Jeff Jeffrey**

Reporter

*Houston Business Journal*

