



## MEDIA RELEASE

*Embargoed until 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014*

### LAUNCH OF 'MY GREEN HOME' CHALLENGE

#### **One South African family will change their home to help change the world**

Today the Ngewana family launched their public journey of greening their home and lifestyle. Bulelwa Ngewana, the Mother of the family says: "We've always had good intentions, but haven't been sure about where to start. So we're taking on the My Green Home challenge, and we'll be getting help with training and a sponsored green 'makeover'." The Ngewanas are improving their habits and will install energy-efficiency and green equipment, to show others how to save money by going green.

Zwelethu the Father explains: "Our goal is to cut our electricity consumption by 15% with 'no cost' changes and with equipment take this to 40% percent in just three months". They are also aiming to reduce water by 20% and recycle 75% of their waste, and they are challenging other South Africans to join them in taking action at home.

Starting this week, South Africans can learn and save along with the Ngewana's, following their journey at [www.mygreenhome.org.za](http://www.mygreenhome.org.za) and on Twitter (@mygreenhomesa). The website has useful advice and resources to get started, based on cost criteria. Regular competitions will reward people who participate, with a range of green prizes and a grand prize of another 'green home makeover'.

My Green Home is led by the Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA, [www.gbcsa.org.za](http://www.gbcsa.org.za)), with main co-funding from the German government through the South African-German Energy Programme (SAGEN) as part of the bilateral cooperation between South Africa and Germany. SAGEN is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ <http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/17790.html>), an international organisation which supports the German government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

It is also supported by the 49M ([www.49m.co.za](http://www.49m.co.za)) campaign and the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI, <http://www.sanedi.org.za>) as well as a range of product sponsors, partner organisations and collaborators. (See [www.mygreenhome.org.za](http://www.mygreenhome.org.za))

Says Brian Wilkinson, the CEO of GBCSA, "The Green Building Council South Africa leads the transformation of the South African property industry towards environmental sustainability. We started by influencing commercial property market, primarily, but MyGreenHome moves to the level of our individual homes where we and our families can all get involved. We're delighted that the Ngewana family have taken on this challenge to inform and inspire us. We wish them well, and we'll all be watching their progress. We thank the German Government and its South African-German Energy Programme for providing co-funding, and the partners, many sponsors and collaborators that have come on board".

**Ends.** – But see Note to Editors below

## NOTE TO EDITORS:

For interviews or more information, please contact Jodi Kupper at [mygreenhome@gbcsa.org.za](mailto:mygreenhome@gbcsa.org.za) or at telephone (0861) 042272 (0 GBCSA) or cell (084) 590-5700.

Please respect the privacy of the family, and particularly not publish their physical address.

The timeline of this journey is as follows:

- In February, we installed a set of electricity and water meters to check and analyse their consumption.
- In March, it was 'business as usual' for the family as we monitored their behaviour and usage.
- In April, the family get training and start with 'no cost' changes in their habits and behaviour.
- In early May, the big retrofit transforms the house with energy-efficient technology and Earth-friendly products installed from top to bottom, inside and out. The weekly competitions start in May too.
- In June, when the house is as efficient as possible, renewable energy is added, with solar photovoltaic panels on the roof to generate some of their electricity needs.
- Through to the end of August, we watch to see how much they can save and how their lifestyle changes

Note that the primary focus of My Green Home is on energy efficiency, as it's the main interest of the major funder of this project. However, water and waste and other green-related issues are also addressed.

The actions suggested on the website [www.mygreenhome.org.za](http://www.mygreenhome.org.za) are deliberately not an exhaustive list of all possible tips. We have focused on the few things which can make the most difference. But of course all the little things do add up, and so we encourage everyone to do everything they can at home. This is part of establishing a more sustainable way of doing things in our homes and giving our children the opportunity to grow up with this as part of their daily routines and culture.

Please encourage your audience to visit the [www.mygreenhome.org.za](http://www.mygreenhome.org.za) website. They can learn from it, engage with it by posting comments, and share it with others. People can send photos of what they're doing at home for the regular competitions from May to July 2014 and stand a chance to win great prize 'giveaways' and ultimately another big 'green home makeover'.

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