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Through zero to hero: The ultimate guides to creating zero carbon homes and zero waste construction

THE South East Centre for the Built Environment (SECBE) has launched two new online guides targeted at the construction industry to help them meet the twin challenges of building zero carbon homes by 2016 and to radically cut waste.

2016 may seem a long way off, but new houses have to reduce their carbon impact by 25% by 2010 and 44% by 2013, so the time to find out about the requirements is now. SECBE's Low Carbon Housing website provides a comprehensive guide to policies, standards and likely future

regulations including the Code for Sustainable Homes, as well as providing online signposting to every aspect of low carbon design and build. It also features case studies to show just how people are meeting these escalating challenges. Building sustainable homes is not just about reducing carbon dioxide, so the website expands on other key areas to minimise environmental impacts. Sections include managing the materials they are built from, the water they use and the waste they generate.

Reducing waste is vital and the new

SECBE online guide to waste minimisation services takes users through how waste can be managed throughout the building cycle. It reports on the opportunities to process the main construction materials, and then provides detailed information to signpost training, used material exchanges, and recycling networks. Links to the host of information available on other specialist websites are also included.

SECBE's Chief Executive, Derek Rees, says: "Construction businesses, especially smaller ones, might feel

they are being enveloped in a cloud of eco initiatives as the drive to low carbon intensifies. They need to find out quickly about carbon zero homes and our guide will be a great way to get ahead. Our industry also has to think differently about waste; it costs builders (and their clients) money, threatens the environment and is truly unsustainable. There's also going to be an increasingly tough regulatory regime, so the sooner we really manage our waste the better. Our online guides provide an excellent start."