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**MEDIA RELEASE**

# ALIS technology backgrounder

March 08, 2011

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Researchers and students at Simon Fraser University's School of Interactive Arts and Technology developed the aware-living interface system (ALIS).

The interactive system helps residents manage energy use and reduce carbon emissions. ALIS incorporates a standard web-based interface with tools to monitor energy and water use by house area and by time.

ALIS tracks energy production from solar systems, allows residents to set personal goals and track progress, and provides entry to social networking tools to share group challenges, tips and discussion.

House-controls for lighting, temperature and appliances are digitally connected so they can be run via standard thermostats, light switches or the ALIS interface.

ALIS touch screens are distributed throughout the house and there is an ALIS app for the iPhone™.

In addition, informative art elements are used to convey energy and water use, notably the kitchen backsplash that changes subtly as consumption increases over the day.

Pulse Energy™ software within ALIS provides real-time performance feedback about the home's energy use.

ALIS controls were carefully developed to let residents tune the energy settings of their home with one press.

Similar to turning a light on or off, the resident can turn the house up or down in terms of energy use, to make consumption management easier.

ALIS serves as the user interface for the underlying Central Home Automation System (CHAS) built by VerTech.

Based on the Embedded Automation Controls™ home-automation system, the CHAS manages all of the subsystems of the house.

ALIS was initially developed as part of a solar house built for the International Solar Decathlon in Washington DC in 2009.

SFU Professor Lyn Bartram, a small team of students headed by her, and engineering consultant Chris Brandson designed and built interactive systems for North House.

A tri-university project headed by SFU Professor Rob Woodbury oversaw the development of North House. Architects at the University of Waterloo, one of the project partners, designed and built North House.

Following its fourth-place finish at the 2009 International Solar Decathlon in Washington D.C., Bartram and Woodbury were

keen to see ALIS adapted to a B.C. version of North House. That led to SFU, the City of Vancouver, BC Hydro and many more partners collaborating on redesigning and extending ALIS's capabilities for West House.

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