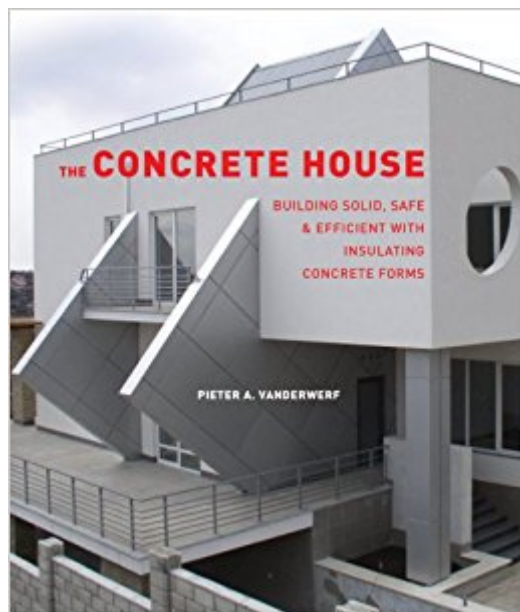




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# The Concrete House: Building Solid, Safe & Efficient With Insulating Concrete Forms



## Synopsis

Prospective homeowners will welcome this introduction to a durable, energy-efficient new building technology: insulating concrete forms (ICFs). Written by a top expert in the field, and organized in an accessible question-and-answer form, it will help homebuyers decide whether an ICF is right for them and how to get the most for their money. Every aspect of planning and construction is covered, from exactly what an ICF is to the intricacies of building a concrete house, from choosing a contractor to selecting a suitable design for the system. There's crucial advice on how to make sure construction goes smoothly, diagrams and photos to illustrate every point, beautiful ICF homes on display, and explanations of how these homes differ from conventional ones and why they cost less to maintain.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 176 pages

Publisher: Sterling; First Edition edition (November 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1402736290

ISBN-13: 978-1402736292

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 9 x 0.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #871,491 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #87 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Materials & Material Science > Concrete #371 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Reference > Architecture > Methods & Materials #1142 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Buildings > Residential

## Customer Reviews

This book is written for the general public and provides an excellent and thorough introduction to icfs (insulating concrete forms). This book would be useful to any person considering building a home with them. I think all contractors, builders, architects, and engineers should also be aware of this framing system and would benefit from the book. The book is extremely easy to understand. The author assumes you are starting from zero. Although at times you may be reading some very basic stuff that you know already, overall this is an effective strategy in that the author ensures that everyone can understand everything in the book, even those who have no previous knowledge of standard construction. This is done through clear writing and also very good illustrations. I am

considering building a new home with icfs and this has given me an excellent foundation. Although this book provides a lot of useful information, it is not a substitute for a structural engineer or an experienced icf contractor. It is also not a "how to" guide with step by step instructions for building yourself with icfs. The book is not boring at all and has been a huge help to me as I decide how to frame my new house. A great investment.

I almost didn't buy this book because there were so many negative reviews. But, I'm really glad I did. If you're looking for a book to tell you how to build your own concrete house, without contractors or construction crews, then yes, I could see how you'd be disappointed. This book is mainly for people like me, who are investigating potential building options, and might not have a lot (or, any) experience with the home building process. I didn't find the author particularly pompous at all, and learned a great deal about how houses are actually constructed, including the differences between typical wood frame construction and building with ICF. True, the author does often mention you should to 'talk to your contractor', but he also often gives another paragraph or two with more specifics, and WHY you may not need to be involved in that particular degree of minutia. Now, you may or may not agree with that assessment, but it at least gives a good enough jumping off point to investigate the issue in more detail if you do feel it's necessary. This, in a nutshell, is the value of this book. It's not a complete manual on how to physically build your own concrete home. It provides a well-informed introduction to the process, answers many typical questions a first-time builder may have, particularly about the building material qualities/benefits/issues, and gives you a much better idea where to look next for more detailed information.

The Concrete House, by Pieter A. VanderWerf. It is an interesting book to read if you are considering building in this manner. It is written from an American perspective, for the American market (I'm Australian), but as it doesn't get too technically involved, it translates quite well. This is not a "how to build" book. It is written in question and answer format, and is aimed more at those who have heard of the ICF style of building but want to know more about the features and benefits, and basic construction details of it.

This book was very informative and I received it in excellent used condition. It would be a great primer for anyone interested in or considering an ICF home project.

The author is a great fan of himself, and while I had high hopes that this book would delve more into

the hands-on design and construction aspects of building a concrete structure, it was more about how a prospective homeowner seeks out qualified contractors and what to look for / avoid in business dealings with a contractor. By the way, I am a contractor looking to do a concrete place-for myself, so I'm well aware of the nuances and headaches of building. This book could have been about conventional stick built or Lego blocks, it's a thin look at actual concrete building.

After the first few pages in this book, I felt I was reading something written by Bobby Jindal. The author's style would be great for teaching the subject of concrete home construction to 8 year olds. His simplistic and self-inflating style is annoying and distracting, but worst of all, it gives the impression that there is not going to be any real informational meat (i.e. real world engineering or design info) that an adult reader would be interested in, and would have expected from a technical manual. This author is quickly losing my interest in investing any more of my time digging deeper into this book, and I haven't even got to page 15 yet. Disappointing.

ICFs provide cost-effective ease of construction, energy efficiency, quiet, and long-term sustainability for any location (mountain, coast, valley, flood plain, frequent tornadoes, cold and hot, arid and humid). The use of steel studs on interior walls provides strong structure and reduces thermal breaks. ICFs work for basements and multistory structures. They are insect-proof. Anything you can design and build with typical "boards and sticks" construction you can do much better with ICFs. ICFs can be used for floors, ceilings, walls and roofs or SIPs (structural insulated panels) can be used. ICFs are suitable for the tropics or high elevation snowy mountains. Want a house that will still be there after a severe tornado? Look into ICFs. How do you introduce a contractor to ICFs who has been building the same way for 25 years with the motto, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" (resistant to changing methods of construction) - give your contractor a copy of this book. Spend one 24 hour in an ICF house - feel the ambient temperature, listen to the sound, look at the natural and artificial lights, then demand high quality, sustainable ICF construction for yourself, your business, schools and church. Houses are expensive and costly to operate, regardless of climate. ICFs require good thorough thinking in advance (you're not going to move a window or door easily later on). Want sustainable cost-effective construction in and above ground? Build ICFs.

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