

What is Building Green and What Does it Mean for You?

The built environment has a profound impact on our natural environment, economy, health and productivity. Building green is a design and construction method that recognizes this impact and focuses on creating buildings that minimize the impact on the environment while positively affecting the economy and the health of the building occupants. To address these impacts, building green focuses on four major components:

1 **Energy & Water Conservation**

Examples: Insulate spaces well, incorporate day lighting and install ENERGY STAR equipment to reduce energy use. Smart irrigation controllers & next generation water saving devices conserve water.

2 **Site Planning**

Examples: Implement erosion control measures during construction and orient the building to appropriately capture solar energy and cooling breezes.

3 **Material and Resource Use Reduction**

Examples: Use products made of recycled materials or reuse existing building structures.

4 **Indoor Air Quality Improvements**

Examples: Focus on the health of the users by using fewer chemicals and materials composed of less toxic chemicals.



This project achieved the highest Built Green Santa Barbara three star rating by implementing green building features such as energy star appliances, "no VOC" paints, and a high efficiency furnace. Salvaged wood was also used in the project.

Did You Know:

The City offers expedited permit processing for projects meeting the 2-star Built Green level, LEED "Silver" rating, or other comparable programs rating.



**Sustainable
Santa
Barbara**

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Building Green *in Santa Barbara*

*Planning a
Construction Project?
Remodeling Your Home?*

*Then You Might Consider
Building Green*



*This Santa Barbara house is an example of a
"carefully designed and mounted panel solar energy system".
Source: R&M Technologies*

What is building green and what does it mean for you? Look inside for the answer to these questions and for additional resources which provide in-depth information.

Ready to be Green?

Are you interested in building green? Here are some great websites that offer educational information, as well as information regarding products you can use to green your home or construction project.

Built Green Santa Barbara

(www.builtgreensb.org) was created by the Santa Barbara Contractor's Association and offers a rating system for green home remodels and new commercial construction.

United States Green Building Council

(www.usgbc.org) provides the most widely used rating system for green buildings: Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED)

Building Green

(www.buildinggreen.com) offers information designed to help improve the environmental performance of buildings.

Oikos (www.oikos.com), which is the Greek word for "home," is devoted to serving professionals whose work promotes sustainable design and construction.

Alameda County in California

(www.stopwaste.org) offers a wealth of valuable information regarding green building.

County of Santa Barbara Innovative Review Committee

(www.countyofsb.org/plandev/bldg-safety/ibrp/default.html) offers incentives for residents and businesses in the county to build green.

Green Building Guidelines for Santa Barbara County

(<http://www.sustainabilityproject.org/pdfs/1Intro.pdf>) offers green building guidelines for construction, created by The Sustainability Project.

The Environmental Protection Agency's

ENERGY STAR Program (www.energystar.gov) certifies various products and even whole houses that are more energy efficient than the standard.

Why Build Green?

Building green is rapidly gaining popularity as more architects, builders, and homeowners recognize its benefits. These benefits fall into three main categories:

Environmental benefits.

Buildings are major contributors to consumption and waste. For example, buildings in the U.S. consume approximately 65% of all electricity used. Building green can:

- Enhance and protect ecosystems and biodiversity
- Improve air and water quality
- Reduce solid waste
- Conserve natural resources

Economic benefits.

Through a focus on efficiency, conservation of resources, and natural lighting, green building can:

- Reduce operating costs
- Enhance asset value and profits
- Improve employee productivity and satisfaction
- Optimize life-cycle economic performance

Health and community benefits.

People spend the vast majority of their time in buildings and their health can be negatively impacted through the use of toxic chemicals in paints, carpets, and sealants. Building green focuses on the use of fewer toxic materials and can:

- Improve air, thermal and acoustic environments
- Enhance occupant comfort and health
- Minimize strain on local infrastructure

Books

- Green by Design: Creating a Home for Sustainable Living, *Angela Dean*
- The New Ecological Home: A Complete Guide to Green Building Options, *Dan Chiras*
- Green Building Products: The GreenSpec Guide to Residential Building Materials, *Sarah Susanka*
- The Not So Big House, *Sarah Susanka*
- Green Buildings Pay, *Brian Edwards*
- Sustainable Landscape Construction: A Guide to Green Building Outdoors, *J. William Thompson*
- Green Remodeling: Changing the World One Room at a Time, *David R. Johnston, Kim Master*
- Green Building Resource Guide, *John Hermansson*
- The Passive Solar House, *James Kachadorian*

Building Green Strategies

Building green strategies can be used in everything from single room remodels to skyscrapers. Below are some building green examples.



*New cabinets created from wood salvaged from old cabinetry.
Photo by Emily Hagopian.*



*Solartubes and windows are excellent ways to utilize natural light and reduce the need for artificial lighting.
Photo by Emily Hagopian.*



Bamboo flooring is considered more sustainable than wood due to bamboo's fast growth cycles.