

## Green Home Construction ... A Ready Reckoner

Several aspects will impact a green home construction, and these need to be integrated in the primary plan of the building. In a green home, use of recyclable material is very important from the point of view of conservation. This could include using high fly ash content cement instead of normal cement. Salvage of reusable material from landfills, such as using reengineered wood or ancient wooden beams retrieved from old houses are other aspects of using recycled materials. It is best to incorporate the green features during the construction phase. Installation of a drip irrigation system instead of a sprinkler system is one such measure. A rainwater harvesting plant is best effective when installed in the initial design stage. To aid absorption of rainwater into the surrounding soil, pathways, and roadways can be made out of permeable paving material.

The use of Forest Stewardship Council (SFC) certified wood for doors, window frames and other places where wood is required also helps the green cause. Even employing no/low formaldehyde based paints for the interiors of the house helps in creating healthier living conditions. Harnessing the power of the sun by fitting solar heaters and photovoltaic cells helps reduce electricity consumption and lower bills. Greater reflectivity of light colored roofs as against dark colored helps in reducing heat buildup in the house. Light colored roofs do not undergo as much thermal expansion as dark colored roofs and hence last longer.

Green Home construction need to also address the inside fittings of the house, both static as well as movable. It is best to use recycled wood furniture for the house interiors. Garden furniture can be made out of recycled plastic, which is easily available in the market. Using cork or bamboo flooring instead of traditional hardwood flooring helps greening the house. It is better to use natural linoleum rather than vinyl linoleum. Make sure that the ducting in the house is leak proof. It has been estimated that leaks in ducting cause a loss over 10% of the energy used. Fitting flow reducers to faucets and shower heads and low volume flushes helps reduce 40% consumption of water without anybody noticing the difference. Formaldehyde free wall and ceiling insulation help reduce sickness. One good material for insulation is cellulose insulation made out of recycled paper.

In a green home construction, effective use is made of low emissive double paned windows. Double paned windows not only provide more insulation but also help make the house quieter. Insulation can further be enhanced using wooden frames for housing windows. The piping of the house should have a jacket to reduce loss of heat. Use these tips to make your home truly green.

### About the Author

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