

IAQ by Gord Cooke

IAQ and Green



There has been a remarkably sharp turn towards green initiatives by many mainstream companies – including Wal-Mart, Cadburys and of course Toyota and Honda (Toyota recently sold its one millionth hybrid vehicle). New home builders and renovators are participating in this encouraging and compelling trend as well. There are dozens of green building programs and faced with too much information from many green programs, government initiatives, industry groups and manufacturers, going green can be very daunting. Fortunately, all green housing programs agree on and strive for the following five elements (each in their own way, of course):

- Efficient use of energy
- Healthy indoor environments
- Efficient use of water
- Efficient use of land
- Efficient use of building materials

HVAC contractors will recognize the importance of selling products that help clients to go green, but in the coming months let's emphasize the importance of how HRVs and ERVs fit nicely into the greening of new and existing buildings. Their contribution to healthy indoor environments should be obvious. Be reminded that HRVs not only recover up to 80% of waste heat but also empower builders and homeowners to make building envelopes much tighter without fear of incurring moisture or other IAQ problems. Carefully controlling the flow of air in and out of buildings is undoubtedly the most cost effective energy saving measure available to builders.

The phrase "Build Tight, Ventilate Right" has long been the mantra of building science advocates, so heat recovery ventilation is recognized by all green building programs as an important component.

So as you help your clients make sense of the many green decisions available remember that unlike many new, emerging technologies, HRVs and ERVs are a proven technology that earn "points" in at least two elements of green buildings and are thus a valuable first step towards building green.

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Special Contributor