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AoHT

Ms Field

Green Home

If you are a resident of San Francisco you may wonder if where you live is 'green.' By the word 'green' I mean you may wonder if it's environmentally safe. Well, if your home was built before 2000 your home is probably not 'green' at all.

San Francisco is trying to go 'green.' I have all the information that you are looking for. What you are going to read about is size, location, interior, and exterior of a house. You will also read about water and energy in the house. You will be asking yourself, "What can we do to have a 'green' home?". I met a great architect, Manuel Torres, who gave me more information about 'green' homes. He is the owner of MTC Designs, a company that is located in Alameda, California. He told me that homes that save water and energy are half 'green.' If your home was not built after 2000, you can still make it 'green' by saving water, energy, and you can renovate your home with a little of money and make it 'green.'

Mr. Torres said, "To be 'green' you need to think small." This means that if we make our home smaller we can save money. Construction costs for small houses are cheaper. And the heating and the air conditioning will be cheaper in a smaller house. And by thinking small we don't just save money, we can also save the environment. Americans always make things big. They don't need to make it big when they do not have a lot of people in their homes. By making things big they are not helping the environment. You can change your attitude and be happy with

smaller things. So help the environment and save money. It's better for our lives. A small thing can make a big change.

To have a 'green' home you need to think about a good location. It is important to know a good place to have your home but if you are shopping for a home, you can look for a good place to buy it. Before you buy it check the materials that the contractors use to build that home. A good example, for people that are going to build their homes in San Francisco, they should know that most of the time it is cold. You would like to make your home warm, and you would need a heater. That is going to be a waste of energy. But if you think about building your home where you can get heat from the sun, you may get your home warm and save energy and money. Put your home so that the sunlight will come from east and south. This is an easy way to save money and the environment.

If you already know the location and the plan of your home you are ready to build your home. There are nine steps that you would have to follow to build your 'green' home. You already read the introduction of this paper, so you already have made two steps in the plan. This means you planned the size, the design of your home and the location, where you want to put your home. The next seven steps are about how to build your home.

The first step is to have the wood. The wood that you are going to use in a 'green' home is an organic material, a natural composite of cellulose fibers. This composite is strong in tension. In the strict sense wood is produced as secondary xylem in the stems of trees and other woody plants.¹ This wood is a big part of life because if we think about it, trees give us the oxygen that we need to stay alive and wood gives us our homes. So if you cut a tree for wood for your home, have in mind that you can tell the construction people to replace the tree with a new

¹<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wood>

tree. That way you will be help the environment and you will not be doing any wrong.

Now in your home building the second step is the doors and windows. You can decide how many doors and windows you want to have. It is better if you put at least two windows in each room. For this step you might want to use doors and windows that can help you design your home so that it can look as good as anyone else's. At the same time you want to live in an environmentally safe place.

The most famous windows are the Held-wen double-hung wood windows. These windows are 24 inches by 38 inches. They are natural with LowE insulated glass. The benefits for these windows are that LowE coating on the glass helps make the window energy-efficient. Panes tilt for easy cleaning. Stain-able Ponderosa pine gives the window a natural look. You can put your favorite color if you want. This doors have safety locks and they are heard to break.²

Now the best doors that you can use for your home are wooden doors because they are durable and they have a gorgeous natural look. Again, you can change the color if you want. They create a first impression about a home or other places. These doors offer operational excellence, security, and the design are one of a kind. The door styles are as different as people's lifestyles. If you want to match the doors with the windows you can both paint them and design them the same way. They have different types of doors. You can choose between entry doors, French doors, sliding doors, inward opening and folding doors.

Next is the third step this step will help you have a good decoration on your home. This means that to have a 'green' home you will need a 'green' floor. For the 'green' floor you will use bamboo flooring. This is the most famous 'green' floors because this bamboo flooring is

²http://www.homedepot.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/ProductDisplay?storeId=10051&productId=202509146&langId=-1&catalogId=10053&ci_sku=202509146&ci_src=14110944&cm_mmc=shopping-_googlebase-_D30X-_202509146&locStoreNum=627

a mix of natural plants. So if we use bamboo as a floor we can use it anywhere you want. You don't have to put carpet in any of your rooms because bamboo is natural and easy to clean and you can design it yourself with natural paint or other 'green' decorations that you prefer. And besides if you put carpet in the rooms you will have to use vacuum and you will use too much electricity. Bamboo is not made with bad chemicals that can affect the environment or our health like many other floors. But the best part is if you want to save money you are going to be surprised. Bamboo is about \$5 to \$10 dollar per square foot and is the same price as the durability of the floor. This means that the price doesn't define the quality of the product. Since your home is not going to be big you will save money on the amount of the flooring.

Then the fourth step is to have paint, to put color on the outside and the inside of your home. The paint from the outside is made differently from the paint in the inside. The outside paint does not have harmful chemicals, and no added solvents. You can use it to paint over old paint that has oil in it. It has a formula that has Zero VOC (volatile organic compounds). VOCs can affect the environment and human health.³ It is also 100% acrylic to ensure lasting performance. It has resistance to rainy and snowy weather. For inside paint you can use zero VOC primer for wallboard. Both paints have the same benefits. These are low odor, clean air formula, excellent durability, and washable finish. This describes what a 'green' paint has and most of our homes do not have this 'green' paint.

Then the fifth step is to save electricity in the use of light. Now you might be wondering, "what does light has to do with being 'green'?" Well, this is a big tip to have a 'green' home and to save even more money. When in the walls of your homes you build windows, these windows will help you to not use the electric light all the time. To be 'green' you

³http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volatile_organic_compound

have to know how to heat with the sun. This means if you use more the sunlight it will help you not to pay too much on your electricity bill. At night when the sun is gone you will like to have light. For your 'green' home you will use CFL (Compact Fluorescent lamp) light bulbs with lap harp. Lap harp is a metal wire part below the lamp socket and supports your lamp shade. The lamp bulb is 26w energy saving CFL, and has an upgrade wire frame harp for a perfect bulb fit. The 26 watt power consumption equals a 100 watt light output. This bulb could save someone up to \$84 dollars because with this bulb you don have to replaces it too many times, it has a good potantion. it also reduces global warming and is energy start rated. Fully detailed installation instructions are included. UL listed 6,000 rated hour life with a 3000K temperature.

But you have another way to save energy and help the environment. Solar power is the conversion of sunlight into electricity either directly using photovoltaic or indirectly using concentrated solar power. You can put solar power in your home. This will help where you think you will use more light. California is popular because it has a lot of solar power and if we save the energy now it will help for the future.

The sixth step is to know how you can save water. The best place to save water is in the bathroom. The bathroom is the place where you use most of the water. But now in this century we have things that help you to be 'green' even in the bathroom.

For your home we are going to have low flow shower heads. These shower heads help you to save about 80% of water a month because they have 100% power pressure.⁴ It also helps you reduce energy usage, protect the environment and natural water habitats and the best thing is that it save money on your water bill.

In your bathroom you not only have the shower head you also have the toilet. Mr Torres

⁴http://www.waterpikecoflow.com/?gclid=CO_ZodnK3aYCFQkGbAodMhUo2A

told me that for his company he uses a lot of green toilets. He says that they toilets save up to 50% of water compared to traditional toilets and they are flexible in size and with low power consumption, less water use and smaller. If you put your bathroom on one of the corners of your home it would also help you save energy because you can put a window on the back of the bathroom. You don't need to use the electricity. You would use the light of the sun and this would help you save energy and it would help you save more money on the bills.

Then the last one but not least is the seven step to use local material. This means that we need to choose the materials that the country has because if we use the materials from other countries we are wasting things. If you like something that is from the other side of the country you are going to waste too much money, energy and water and gasoline to get it to this side. You might be asking yourself how can that happen? When you buy the materials they have to go in the airplane for transportation and the airplane will use gasoline and a lot of energy and money. and that is not all. after the airplane the materials have to go on a car so they can get to your home and you will need more money and you will not help the environment and you will also waste time by waiting for the materials. so go around your where you live and buy the best materials that you found they might be cheaper then what you think.

This is an easy way to save money and to help the environment. Think about the next generations that is coming and that need to live in safe environment. There are many ways to have a green home use this steps to help you have a good place to live and that you can be proud of. Don't sit and watch the TV and listen to the people that tell you that the world is being contaminated by the chemicals and staffs that can affect our own world and the environment. Thank you to Mr Manuel Torres who give me advice and more information about 'Green Homes'.

interview

I interviewed Mr Manuel Torres who is an architect. He is the owner of MTC designs. This company is located in Alameda California. As the interview started,

I ask him about how much money does people spent on “green” buildings that he makes and he said that it depends on the building and it is hard for him to say about the price Because in a green home do not depend on just the building it include the sizes and the interior of the house and it include the details after the home is built and all the decorations for their homes.

Then I ask him about the materials that are environmental friendly and what was best option for the materials and he said that the green materials help the environment like materials that are natural and don’t have a lot of chemicals and he said that is better to use local materials because if you buy materials that are made in other country is not helping at all because the material has to transport from the other country through here and it will affect the environment because the airplane will affect it because the airplane will spend petroleum and that is a big problem because its affecting the environment.

He also said that the materials are more expensive when they are transport. I also ask him in what way green homes are different from not green homes and he say that green home are a little more expensive but is better because it help the environment.

