



Green Building Fact Sheet

Past

Specialized, niche home builders began constructing resource-efficient, environmentally sensitive homes in the early 1970s. The home building industry coined the phrase “green building” in the late 1980s, turning a movement into a quiet revolution.

The first official green home building program began in 1991 in the city of Austin, Texas, and the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Denver introduced the first HBA-owned green building program in 1995. Over the years, Built Green® Colorado has become the largest green building program in the nation, with more than 35,000 certified green homes.

Present

Today, new homes are twice as energy-efficient as they were 30 years ago, thanks to cutting-edge green building techniques and technologies available for new and remodeled homes. Nationwide, roughly 100,000 homes have been built using local green building program guidelines since 1990, more than 14,000 of them in 2004 alone. More than 1,000 builders participate in local green building programs.

Introduced in 2005, the NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines (www.nahb.org/gbg) brought environmentally friendly building techniques to mainstream builders and home builders associations. The guidelines offer builder and market-driven solutions in seven areas, including lot preparation and design, resource efficiency, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, occupancy comfort and indoor environmental quality, and operation maintenance and homeowner education. Now, the Guidelines form the basis of the NAHB National Green Building Program (www.nahbgreen.org) and the first-ever residential green building standard.

More specifically, homes built today use myriad green building techniques and technologies that:

- **Lower operating costs**—homes are equipped with more efficient heating and cooling systems and use less water, resulting in lower monthly utility bills. Improved construction methods better protect homes from rain and ground water and reduce upkeep and replacement costs, while use of recycled materials helps conserve natural resources.
- **Reduce maintenance issues**—landscaping uses native or drought-resistant plants and grasses, and decks made of pressure-treated lumber or synthetic materials need no sealing or staining.
- **Increase home value**—homeowners with documented lower monthly utility bills are reporting higher re-sale values.
- **Improve environmental quality**—moisture-control products and low VOC paints contribute to a more comfortable indoor environment, and efficient use of materials helps conserve natural resources.

NAHB is also introducing the Certified Green Professional designation for builders and remodelers who have completed 24 hours of training and have committed to continuing education, as well.

Future

Green building is a growing trend among home builders nationwide, with more than 60 successful green building programs now in existence. About 50 green building programs are owned or operated by members or affiliates of the NAHB nationwide and that number will expand as the NAHB National Program takes root.