

Green Design Features Research Report

Architecture
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What is Green Design?

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, "Generally, green homes are healthier, more comfortable, more durable, and more energy efficient and have a much smaller environmental footprint than conventional homes."

Sustainable properties are the future of the real estate industry. Consumer demand, residential builders, federal government incentives, and local government policy are making this happen. Many consumers, real estate professionals, and property owners are taking steps towards greening their properties.

As the green building movement gains momentum, so does the consumer demand for greener properties. Two-thirds of consumers are paying attention to green homes and buildings; they recognize the link between green properties, cost savings and healthy living.

Indoor Features

- Commission HVAC systems to validate and document design performance intent. Review commissioning report to ensure that adequate ventilation rates have been achieved prior to initial occupancy. One Commissioning technique that can be employed over the life of the building is the use of a well maintained carbon dioxide monitoring system that will continually provide diagnostic feedback on the actual amount ventilation provided in the most densely occupied spaces. HVAC system should be installed with filters with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) of 11 for residential, commercial, telecommunications and industrial facilities.
- Adopt green meeting practices. Evaluate potential hotel and conference center venues that are sustainable in that they recycle, purchase recycled or recyclable items, use non-disposable food and beverage service, have bottle deposits, a plan for leftover food and meeting materials, and practice water and energy conservation.
- Work closely with lighting designer to reduce security lighting and its associated light pollution. With overly bright security lighting, often the "bad guys" can safely stage operations just out of range, invisible to the security personnel whose eyes are adjusted to the overly bright immediate environment.

Outdoor Features

- Install sufficient bike racks to meet demand.
- Designate shuttle/bus stops in safe and accessible areas close to the facility.
- Provide sufficient parking spaces for carpools/vanpools.
- Support teleconferencing and videoconferencing through proper operations and maintenance of communication systems.
- Solar panels for natural energy and efficiency.
- Use low impact development principles.
 - Use rainwater cisterns, vegetated swales and depressions, constructed wetlands and other onsite storm water storage to reduce runoff.
 - Reduce the amount of impervious site area.
 - Filter surface runoff.
 - Use pervious paving materials.