

## What Is "Going Green," and How Can I Do It?

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"Going Green" is an increasingly popular subject today because there is a genuine need for it. Green building for example incorporates methods that embrace the importance of saving the Earth's natural resources. These are sustainable business practices, not just a passing trend. More and more Builders are finding ways to do their part, and the progress is almost staggering.

Below we will show you ways that you and your company can go green or begin to think in that direction.

Take for example your building wants to go green. Here is a basic yet valuable way to start. See where you stand on this "Green Fact." Did you know that compact-fluorescent lamps (CFLs) last 10-times longer than incandescent lamps and use 75-percent less energy, which equals roughly \$25 in savings over the lifetime of the lamp? For the average office building, that would be an approximate saving of \$6.00 per day for each occupied office space. This doesn't sound like much, but do the figures of 25 floors with 20 offices each. And that is just light bulbs. Add water, sewage, and so much more to that, and companies saved from Bankruptcy Courts with their savings.

Most of us will go a certain distance to save our natural resources and protect the planet. But please don't let money be your only motivator. Consider what could happen if you don't help conserve our resources. The Climate, your health, your future, and our natural resource concerns should be just as important if not more as the cost savings. Your actions now will have a positive impact on the environment and everlasting consequences.

So why are regional planners and upper management dragging their feet when it comes to going green? Here are a few ideas that are effective in savings in today's market place.

The first and simplest place to start is size. Smaller homes require fewer resources to build and less energy to heat and cool. Smaller floor plans also cost less, which allows clients to choose finer finish materials and not cost prohibitive on a bigger project. Even consider the floor plan at 1500 square feet and how much lumber it will save. The smaller diameter pipes that save money in the building process also conserve water which is another cost preventative way to save resources.

There are hundreds of other ways that conserve which we will elaborate on, but first step onto the construction sites of the world, or even look around your municipality. Very few construction sites support a recycling program. How easy would it be to separate job site waste for recycling, and how much money could be saved on dumping fees. Scrap metal can be sold to a scrap yard, drywall can be ground up as soil amendment and scrap lumber can be given a new life.

Instead of throwing away seemingly rejected materials, what about donating to one of the more than 500 Habitat for Humanity Habitat ReStores nationwide. These and other recycled building material stores offer everything from doors to ductwork, usually priced at 30-50 percent below retail costs. Don't forget, those donations not only save you the dumping fees, but will give your business a tax-deductible write-off.

Learning how to build green now could open new business opportunities in the future. There are people out there looking specifically for a green building consultant. You could be the next big name in your community, while helping save the Earth too.