

What to ask **Green Product Vendors**

Carpet

- Is there recycled content in the carpet or backing?
- Will you take the carpet back when I am done with it?
- Do you use a non-toxic adhesive?
- Will the carpet pad be non-toxic?
- Will I need to put a toxic chemical on the carpet for stain resistance?
- Is the carpet made of sisal, wool or other natural material?

Resilient Flooring

- Are any plastics in the manufacturing of this product?
- Is this made of cork? linoleum? scrap wood or other natural, rapidly renewable material?
- Do you use a non-toxic adhesive?
- Can it be cleaned with just water and damp mop?
- Do I need to coat it with a toxic sealer to make it last longer?
- Can I use cork in the bathroom or kitchen?

Paint

- Are there less than 150 g / l VOCs in the non-flat and 50 g / l VOC in the flat paint?
- Is the paint durable?
- Does the VOC number increase when you add color? How much?

Wood

- Is this made from wood from FSC forests?
- Is urea-formaldehyde added to the composite wood?
- Is the wood covered with a plastic veneer?
- Can I use a simulated wood made from recycled plastic?

Plumbing Fixtures

- Does the toilet need more than a gallon to flush?
- Does the sink/lav fixture use less than .5 gal per minute?
- Does the showerhead use less than 2.0 gal per minute?

Windows

- Is this a low-e glass?
- Is there gas or air between the two panes of glass?

Landscaping

- How much water will I need to use to get the plants established?
- How much shade will the plants provide when they are mature?
- Will the plants need a lot of pesticides to survive in the climate at my house?
- Will the plants survive in heat without water?

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Los Angeles



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20 Ways to Green Your Home

Site - Strategies

- ◆ Design for maximum open space preserving natural habitats, with native plant materials that aid the natural wild life and their habitats.
- ◆ Minimize hardscape. Use permeable paving.

Water Saving Ideas

- ◆ Install water-conserving fixtures and faucets such as dual flush toilets, front loading washers, low flow faucets, a recirculating pump, and a gray water system
- ◆ Install an efficient irrigation system such as a drip system.
- ◆ Capture and utilize rain water by:
 - ◆ Creating berms
 - ◆ Installing water retention systems
- ◆ Plant native trees and plants or drought tolerant plant material

Energy Saving Practices

- ◆ Design for natural cooling with ventilation, sunshades, and shade trees. Install ceiling fans and a solar powered attic fan.
- ◆ Design for daylighting with maximum exterior exposure, skylights, and windows with light shelves. Light colored walls and ceilings.
- ◆ Minimize heat gain and loss with a light-colored, insulated roof, insulated exterior walls and floors, insulated ducts, and dual-glazed windows. Use Low-E glass for south and west facing glazing.
- ◆ Purchase energy saving equipment: on-demand water heater, energy star appliances, high efficiency heating/ cooling units, and energy efficient lighting.

Rule of Thumb the fewer steps to get from a natural resource to the finish product the more sustainable it is.

Use and Disposal of Materials

- ◆ Recycle construction and demolition waste.
- ◆ Integrate a home recycling and composting area into your kitchen
- ◆ Select natural materials and rapidly renewable resources such as cork, bamboo, wheatboard, linoleum, rubber, and wood from FSC certified forests.
- ◆ Select recycled and recyclable products
- ◆ Reuse materials
- ◆ Use materials manufactured within a 500 mile radius.

Create a Healthy Environment

- ◆ Use low/no-VOC interior paints, stains and sealers, urea formaldehyde free particleboard and insulation, solvent free adhesives, and natural weed and insect killers.
- ◆ Install a Carbon Monoxide Detector and a HVAC unit with Hepa filter.
- ◆ Maximize natural ventilation and daylighting
- ◆ Consider acoustical properties of each space

Money Saving Resources

- ◆ Information and tax credits: www.findsolar.com
- ◆ Rebates for building materials for all of US: www.dsireusa.org
- ◆ CA's Energy Commission's Consumer Energy Center: www.consumerenergycenter.org/erprebate
- ◆ Rebates on Energy Star rate appliances: www.ladwp.com
- ◆ So. Cal. Gas Co. rebates on energy star products: www.socalgas.com/residential/savemoney