



No portion of this article may be reproduced without
express written permission of Style Publishing Group, LLC.
©2007 • All rights reserved.



Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313
E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306

*A Green home in
Forest Hills
photo provided by Green Built
Parade of Homes*



Going Green

By Cynthia Howe

BRAD PITT may be best known for numerous tabloid covers depicting his scintillating relationship with Angelina Jolie, however, there are families in New Orleans who will remember him the rest of their lives as the man who built their green house. Not to be confused with the glass menageries that gardeners erect to accommodate their prized tomatoes, these homes are known for their commitment to energy efficiency and conservation, with the bottom line closing in at a reasonable cost. The green movement is not only popular with humanitarians, environmentalists and politicians; it is an increasingly growing trend across America and in Texas, we're doing it big – real big!

Last year Texas exceeded the nation in building in excess of 60,000 ENERGY STAR homes. This number is quite impressive as it surpasses the next three leading states combined. Texas is also home to Jim Sargent, recognized as having built the Best Green Concept Home in America. He also won the 2006 EnergyValue Housing Gold Award in the custom home, hot climate category for building North Texas' first Zero

Energy Home, a home that does not receive an electricity bill, but generates its own energy. With Texas immersing as a model green state, it is no wonder that the Home Builders Association of Greater Dallas is hosting the first Green Built Parade of Homes event in North Texas.

The presenting sponsor of the event is Green Mountain Energy Company, the only electricity provider in Texas that is dedicated to cleaner energy. The event will take place September 22nd through October 7th in Crossroads, just west of Highway 380 and Preston Road junction, at the Forest Hills subdivision. The innovative homes being presented are greener, cleaner and more efficient. But what makes this "green" trend so popular and what are the pros and cons of adopting the tenants of the green movement?

If you are privileged enough to live in Frisco and your home was built after May 2001, then your home is already considered green, having met or exceeded the requirements of the national ENERGY STAR rating system. Frisco serves as a flagship to the nation

as the first city in the United States to implement a compulsory Residential Green Building Program. As of July 1st of this year, the plan has been revised pursuant to the city's dedication to the success of this program.

The programs of the Home Builders Association of Greater Dallas and the City of Frisco are based on federal guidelines that meet or exceed the ENERGY STAR standards. The programs are dedicated to waste reduction, pollution reduction, water conservation, energy conservation and utilizing durable materials. But what do all these guidelines look like and how does it affect the bottom line for many families already stretching a tight budget?

THE COST OF GREEN

Going green doesn't need to cut into your green. The money you save on lower energy bills, as well as water bills, more than pays for any monies that may be extended during construction or remodeling, given the right amount of time. Furthermore, the resale value of energy-efficient homes is significantly higher than other homes that do not



Well sealed window facing north or south save energy
photo provided by Green Built Parade of Homes

have these innovative features. While many trendsetters are choosing to go green to save money, or protect money, others choose to go green for more philosophical or even religious convictions. To many Americans, to conserve and be thoughtful of our consumption is our responsibility as good stewards of our environment, after all, didn't grandma say, "Waste not, want not?"

While many think of construction waste as unused nails and lunch wrappers, they may not be aware that the average single-family home construction site generates more than 6,000 pounds of construction waste. The first step toward a greener environment is the protection and preservation of existing trees. More efficient ways of cutting down on waste are achieved by utilizing recycle bins on site. There are also products for minimizing building waste such as engineered pre-cut wood products and advanced framing techniques that minimize waste on construction sites.

Electricity, sweet electricity! What would we do without it? Thomas Edison is one of my favorite people, but little did he know what a drain his invention would eventually cause on God's green earth. One obvious way of reducing your energy bill before building is to make

sure your windows do not face directly east or west, but preferably north and south. Also, choose light colored roofing materials. Over 90 percent of the roofs in the United States are dark-colored, absorbing the summer sun's heat into your home. Cool, highly reflective roof systems stay up to 70 degrees cooler than traditional materials during peak summer conditions. Whether you are building, or have built, sealing the attic, installing a heat barrier and insulating the roof deck can save so much green by creating a friendlier atmosphere for your duct system. It is estimated in the average house, 18 percent of a home's energy is lost due to leaking ducts. Also, HVAC systems function more resourcefully when ducts are located in a cooler space. Make a duct check on your current system for possible leaks by feeling along the ducts and sealing leaks with appropriate mastic. While Edison may have really liked his rendition of a light bulb, the curling CFL bulbs last 10 times as long, produce less heat and are a great investment for homeowners and the environment.

The need to conserve water and deal with drought conditions is an ongoing reality for Texas residents. Everyone knows the use of bathroom and kitchen fixtures that demand very little water is

a great place to start in conservation, but don't stop there. The use of rain and freeze sensors on sprinkler systems is one useful way to minimize unnecessary watering, saving multiple gallons of water per month. Installing a faucet that provides instant hot water not only saves water, but also the cook's time. Harvesting rainwater to supply water for your drought-tolerant landscaping is also a handy way to cut down on household water usage.

A SHIFT IN BUILDING MATERIALS

Utilizing products and materials that are durable is another aspect of the green movement. Concrete homes are known for their insulation and durability. While the cost is a bit higher at the onset, the extra cost pays for itself in the long run and adds to the resale value of the home. Other products that add to the durability of the home are engineered trusses, joists and finger-jointed dimensional lumber, as well as innovative exterior siding that comes with a 25-year warranty.

More importantly to many, however, of the green building standards, is the commitment to cleaner air inside the home itself. With the severity of Texas allergies and pollens, as well as the chemicals found in various construction materials that throw off gases, the demand for cleaner interior air is rising. The standards set by Green Built North Texas as well as the city of Frisco meet the need to enhance indoor air quality by controlled mechanical ventilation systems.

During the Green Built Parade of Homes, there will be demonstrations and educational opportunities throughout the program that will enlighten visitors on how they can green up their homes. While some may think you need Brad Pitts' millions to make an environmental difference, all you really need is a few great ideas... and a parade!

Cynthia Howe is a freelance writer living in Little Elm.