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GREEN LIVING HOME BUYER'S CHECKLIST

1. ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

Fact: Household appliances (refrigerator, stove, dishwasher, washer and dryer) consume a significant amount of energy and can account for 45% of a home's total energy bills.

Green Tip: Look for the Energy Star label which indicates that an appliance exceeds federal efficiency standards by 15-20%.

Ease/Cost: Easy to purchase, factor installation and delivery charges/ Cost approximately \$4- 8,000.

2. NON TOXIC PAINT

Fact: According to the EPA, in-door air quality is 3 times more polluted than outdoor air, and paint can be a leading cause, releasing toxic emissions for years!

Green Tip: Look for Natural, zero VOC or low VOC paints (VOC = volatile organic compounds) to improve indoor air quality

Ease/Cost: Easy to purchase, can apply yourself, cost is generally \$30-40 per gallon of paint

3. ENERGY EFFICIENT WINDOWS

Fact: Windows can be a major factor in heat loss in the winter and heat gain in the summer accounting for 25% of energy used for heating and cooling.

Green tip: Look for the Energy Star Label on windows whose performance is region specific. R-Value is the insulating value and Low E is the low emittance coating which can be applied to the surface.

Ease/Cost: Usually requires professional installation/Can be costly depending on the number of windows.

4. FLOORING

Fact: 95% of standard carpet material including pads and dyes release for years toxic chemicals such as styrene and 4-PC known to have detrimental effects on health and are virtually impossible to recycle.

Green tip: Look for flooring that is wood, cork, bamboo, tile, cement, or earth based

Ease/Cost: New products abound for purchase/cost varies with the type chosen but most feel the benefits are huge!

5. BUILDING ORIENTATION

Fact: The orientation of your home can maximize opportunities for passive solar heating, cooling, ventilation and amount of daylight.

Green tip: Ask a professional to determine orientation. In general, a south facing orientation within 30 degrees east or west of true south is best.

Ease/ Cost: Difficult! Will need to assist in different ways with heating and cooling if the orientation is not great.

6. HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEMS

Fact: Heating and cooling your home accounts for 50% of energy use in a standard home.

Green tip: Look for programmable thermostats, in floor radiant heat or an energy efficient furnace, cross ventilation for cooling.

Ease/Cost: Programmable thermostats are easy to install, in floor radiant heat only if you are building or with extensive remodeling,

7. LANDSCAPING

Fact: Shading your home with foliage and planting shade trees in strategic positions can reduce inside temperatures by 21 degrees.

Green tip: Look for south and west facing foliage

Ease/Cost: Pick plants and trees easy to install, can fit most budgets

9. BUILT GREEN HOME

Fact: This program encourages home builders, suppliers and manufacturers to use technologies and products that are better built and better for the environment. Homes are scored on a rigorous checklist of more than 200 features.

Green tip: Look for the Built Green Certification and the rating number for the home

Ease/Cost: Costs are coming down as green goes main stream!

10. SOLAR or WIND POWER

Fact: By using renewable energy resources such as wind and solar you can reduce the amount of carbon dioxide produced by a normal household up to 80%.

Green Tip: Look for homes that have a renewable energy resource installed and save \$\$ on utility bills plus increase your home value \$20.00 for every \$1.00 reduction in annual utility bills.

Ease/Cost: Look for designers/installers that have that have experience and certifications such as NABCEP, costs vary around 25k for a 2.0 kW. Credits and incentives vary and are offered by both state and federal government.

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