



The Forever Home: Going Green

Designing Green to last a lifetime.

By Patsy Zakian-Greenough, CKD, CAPS, CGBP, CID

When Iris Harrell and Ann Benson decided to remodel their two-story home, they were sure about two things. First, they wanted "The Forever Home" so they could age-in-place and have people of all ages and abilities visit. Curb-less showers and an elevator were installed. Secondly, they wanted to implement as many Green practices and materials as possible.

As a Green guideline, they used a rating system from "Build It Green". When a choice was needed, good judgment was foremost. "It's about making the right decision and doing what's important," says Iris Harrell. Instead of replacing the old furnaces, ducts were sealed and tested.

At 93% efficiency the furnaces avoided the landfill.

With Genie Nowicki, a Certified Interior Designer in the State of California and a Certified Green Building Professional, Iris and Ann achieved their goals. Here are some tips for your project:

Energy Savings:

- Add solar panels
- Use dual-glazed windows
- European Rolling Shutters at windows—shades on skylights
- Reduce furnace use with “Zone Heating” such as gas fireplace inserts and heated floors
- Consider heat recovery ventilation systems
- Insulate walls and floors
- Use fluorescent and LED lights
- Energy Star appliances
- Whole house fan and ceiling fans

Indoor Air Quality/Health:

- HVAC?seal ducts, install Hepa filters
- No VOC paints
- Use exterior plywood in interiors?no formaldehyde
- Check crawl space for dampness and drainage

Materials:

- Use Forestry Stewardship Certified Woods (FSC)
- Recycled glass countertops or other man-made countertops
- Engineered floors or refinished floors
- Wool carpet

Water Conservation:

- Use a re-circulating pump with timer

- Consider automatic faucets
- Water conserving appliances

The concept of The Forever Home and being Green was laced into every decision. Throughout construction photos and videos were taken to document the project. Serving as a model for professionals and homeowners alike, this project documentary can be seen on PBS stations:

"The Forever Home: Going Green." Visit www.theforeverhome.com. Remember, good design is always beautiful regardless of the specialty you're designing for. A house should be built not just for whom you are today, but also for the person you'll become tomorrow.

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