

Guiding Principles of Green Building – What Makes a Green Home Different?



Why Should I Buy a Green Home?

There are many different reasons to purchase a green home.

- Lower energy bills
- Less carbon footprint
- Healthier indoor air
- Reduced warranty claims
- Improved durability and less maintenance
- Better resale

What Exactly Does Green Home Certification Focus On?

In North Carolina, there are [five green home certification programs](#), each with its own point system. There is one planned specifically for the North Carolina climate, moisture levels, and yearly temperature changes. If you're considering a green home in the Raleigh area, you'll most likely see certification that involves the [Green Home Builders of the Triangle](#) program.

Each green home must be independently validated and certified by a third party inspection agency. If you don't see a **green home certificate**, your home may not be certified green, even if it does contain many green elements.

The Green Home Builders of the Triangle program offers **three basic levels of certification**, each of which is attained by collecting points in each of seven different sections. [Green home certification ratings can be Bronze, Silver, or Gold.](#)

What are the Categories for Green Home Certification?

In this Raleigh NC area green home certification program, there are seven different categories.

Section 1 - [Lot Design, Preparation, and Development](#)

Resource-efficient site design and development practices help reduce environmental impacts. Green design principles might include **saving trees**, constructing **onsite storm water retention/infiltration** features, and orienting the home for maximum **passive solar heating and cooling**.



Section 2 - [Resource Efficiency](#)

A successful green home starts at the planning stage. Materials are selected with consideration of the environment in mind. Engineered wood products can be more efficient than conventional lumber, because less of the log is wasted. **Job-site waste is carefully monitored.** Building materials are selected with environmental impact in mind - and those materials can vary based on the area. Bamboo flooring that is shipped from thousands of miles away, and processed with unverified glues may not be as environmentally friendly as a **locally harvested oak flooring** that is stained on site with low VOC stains.

Section 3 - Energy Efficiency

Energy consumption has far reaching environmental impacts. One big step towards building a green home is [Energy Star certification](#), which helps reduce energy waste. Many other energy saving building practices can

also be utilized.

Section 4 - Water Efficiency & Quality

Households can use an immense amount of water, and the importance of water resources is becoming increasingly recognized. **Green homes help to conserve water inside and out** - the amount of water conserved depends on the features selected.

Section 5 - Indoor Environmental Quality

One of the attractions of a green home in the Raleigh NC area is a healthy indoor air environment. Initial steps can be the use of **Green Label carpeting**, low VOC paints, and other low-emitting building materials. Another step might be planning for a **detached garage**, which eliminates or reduces Benzene and carbon dioxide infiltration into the home.

Section 6 - Operation, Maintenance, and Homeowner Education

A green builder will provide the homeowner with a manual that explains **proper maintenance and operation**, and **offers alternatives to toxic cleaning substances**, as well as **tips for water**

saving practices. This helps ensure that the home built so carefully will also be maintained in an environmentally friendly manner.

Section 7 - Global Impact

The use of low VOC paints can actually fall under the Global Impact category, because the release of VOCs from wet paints can contribute to **ground-level ozone pollution**. Other items in this category help the environment on a global level, but may be hard to categorize under another topic.

Interested in Finding out More About Building a Green Home?

With hundreds of "green" options available across seven different categories, you can design and build a green home that incorporates everything most important to you. **Almost any floor plan CAN be built in a certifiably green manner**, though there are some floor plans that are more conducive to green building than others.

For more information, [Contact us](#), or call 919-278-8070.



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