

# The Greener Side

2009–Issue #3



## Inside this issue:

WNCGBC News	1
WNCGBC Programs, Updates & Partnerships	2-4
2010 Directory	4
10 Greenwash Signs	5
Green Links & News	5-6
Case Study: Queen Branch Cottage	7-8
Asheville Green Market Article	8-9
Platinum Members	10

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## WNC Green Building Council News

### New Additions to the WNCGBC Staff

#### Elizabeth Koenig / Americorps EnergyEfficiency Coordinator

Elizabeth is a member of Americorps Recovery Project Energize, a new program with the goal of weatherizing 300 low-income homes in WNC this year.

Elizabeth graduated from Warren Wilson College in 2008 with a BA in Anthropology/Sociology. Her work at the Warren Wilson Recycling Center led her to a job with the Arlington County Government outside of Washington DC. There, she worked with the recycling program to improve the county's recycling rate.

Aside from being a trash lady, Elizabeth is excited to learn about other energy conservation methods with Americorps and WNCGBC.

#### Shifra Nerenberg / Office Manager

Shifra graduated from UNCA with a BA in Women's Studies in 2003 and comes to WNCGBC with a background in Ecofeminism and Permaculture Design, as well as more than 10 years experience in office administration.

She is thrilled to be part of the team and learn more about green building! Shifra wholeheartedly supports WNCGBC's mission of creating a sustainable WNC through education because she knows that understanding the problem is the first step toward finding the solution.

### Version 4.0 of NC HealthyBuilt Homes Checklist Now Available!

The WNCGBC is pleased to announce that a new, updated version of the NC HealthyBuilt Homes Program Checklist is now available. The HealthyBuilt Homes staff at the NC Solar Center spent the last year reviewing and updating the HealthyBuilt Homes (HBH) Checklist Ver. 3, and a full revision cycle is now complete. Some Checklist items have been added, some have been removed, and in many cases the items have been clarified or updated. Some of the existing items have been changed to reflect changes in the NC Building Code and to be consistent with other green building standards.

HBH Checklist Version 4 went into effect on October 1, 2009. What this means to HBH members is that all homes registered with the HealthyBuilt Homes Program after October 1 will use the guidelines and credit criteria specified in Version 4 of the Checklist. Any home registered prior to October 1st will still be certified under Version 4.0.

Please visit [www.HealthyBuiltAsheville.org](http://www.HealthyBuiltAsheville.org) for more information and to review the new checklist and reference manual.



# WNCGBC Program Updates



Total homes certified as of 10/27/09: **348**  
Total homes in progress as of 10/27/09: **390**

For a list of all registered builders visit:  
[www.HealthyBuiltAsheville.org](http://www.HealthyBuiltAsheville.org)

## Green Professional Accreditation Program Update

The WNCGBC Green Professional Accreditation (GPA) program is in full swing! Twenty individuals are currently enrolled in the GPA program, with several getting ready to finish.

We have certified four Green Professionals already: **William Fagan** of Timeless Mountain Homes, Conservation Pros' **Carl Donovan** and **Marcus Renner**, and **Arthur Mayfield** of NAI BH Commercial.



The GPA program, which has a low registration cost of \$40, can be completed in as little as one year. The program consists of completing 36 credit hours and passing a test before receiving accreditation—participants gain a well-rounded education of green building practices and set themselves apart from others in the green building profession.

For more information about this great program and to enroll, visit [www.wncgbc.org/green-accredited.php](http://www.wncgbc.org/green-accredited.php) or email [office@wncgbc.org](mailto:office@wncgbc.org).

## CDBG Update

The first homes have been weatherized utilizing the funding from the Community Development Block Grant received from the City of Asheville. The Asheville Green Opportunities (<http://www.greenopportunities.org>) crew is hard at work contacting low-income homeowners who wish to get weatherization services, training their crew on weatherization techniques and beginning to save money and energy through their efforts.

During the next 10 months, WNCGBC and Asheville GO! will weatherize 60 homes in partnership with Community Action Opportunities. We'll keep you up to date on the progress.

Funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

## A Special THANK YOU

In our second year of administering Appalachian Offsets, we would like to recognize two businesses who continue to give a great deal of support to the program.



Earth Fare's donation of their \$0.05 bag charge along with the *Friends*

of Earth Fare fundraising event last year has led to enough donations to offset more than 1500 tons of carbon.



Another supporter of AO, who has supported the program from the beginning, is the Bend of Ivy Lodge. They encourage their guest to offset their vacation and then they match the donation. To date, they have offset more than 240 tons of carbon.

If you or your business is interested in carbon offsets, please visit: [www.AppalachianOffsets.org](http://www.AppalachianOffsets.org).

## Appalachian Offsets



Total tons offset to date: **2750+**

Visit [www.AppalachianOffsets.org](http://www.AppalachianOffsets.org) for more information and to offset your carbon emissions.

## Stay Connected!

There are now several ways to stay connected with WNCGBC and green building.

The WNCGBC website offers great green building resources, education and event calendar, green building industry news and much more. If you are interested in forum discussion, you can become a member of the green building forum at [www.wncgreenbuilding.com](http://www.wncgreenbuilding.com).

Become a fan of WNCGBC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)! Be sure to check them out and pass along to your friends.

# WNC Sustainable Communities Certification

After two years of dedication and hard work, the WNC Green Building Council's Sustainable Communities Program is open for Pilot Projects.

The checklist is still a preliminary draft version and a reference manual is a work in progress. Participation in the program will help us refine the program requirements as well as determine the documentation and resources necessary to successfully administer the program. In exchange for participation, you will receive promotion by the WNC Green Building Council, marketing privileges and a reduced administration fee.

View the most Current Version of the Checklist and an Application for Submittal as a pilot project online at <http://www.wncgbc.org/community-certification.php>. Please review the checklist and fill out the application and submit it to us if you are interested in participating. The WNC Sustainable Communities Committee of the WNCGBC will meet and review each application in detail on a first come first serve basis with a goal of accepting at least 5 diverse projects.

For more information, please contact Maggie Leslie: [maggie@wncgbc.org](mailto:maggie@wncgbc.org).

Special thanks go to David Tuch of Equinox Environmental and Daryl Rantis of Rantis Architects for their dedication in helping see the program to its completion.

## New Partnerships

### WNCGBC Partners with the Indoor airPLUS® Program

WNCGBC is proud to announce its partnership with the US Environmental Protection Agency's Indoor airPLUS Program.

The Indoor airPLUS Program is a partnership between EPA, builders, raters, utilities, and public health and indoor environmental organizations to improve indoor air in new homes. Homes with the Indoor airPLUS label include more than 30 additional home design and construction features to help protect homeowners from a host of health problems associated with poor indoor air quality, including eye irritation, allergies, headaches, and respiratory problems such as asthma.

To earn the Indoor airPLUS label, a home must meet a set of strict guidelines set by the EPA for reducing poor indoor air quality. Indoor airPLUS qualified homes offer homebuyers all the features they want in a new home, plus moisture control, radon control, pest barriers, improved heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, combustion pollutant control, low emission materials, and third-party verification. All Indoor airPLUS qualified homes also meet guidelines for energy efficiency set by Energy Star, the nationally recognized symbol for energy efficiency.

For more information about Indoor airPLUS, visit [www.epa.gov/indoorairplus](http://www.epa.gov/indoorairplus).



### WNCGBC Partners with Haywood Community College

WNCGBC is proud to be partnering with Haywood Community College to help them expand on their green building curriculum for enrolled students as well as through their continuing education offerings.

Haywood Community College received a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to provide training in the green building and renewable energy industries. Along with helping to create a more complete green building curriculum, WNCGBC will be assisting in the implementation of a demonstration photovoltaic system on HCC's green demonstration house that is being built through their construction management program.

# More WNCGBC Updates

## Have Your Project Featured Online!

The WNC Green Building Council is excited to feature Your Green Building Projects on our homepage ([www.wncgbc.org](http://www.wncgbc.org)) and the HealthyBuilt Homes homepage ([www.healthybuiltasheville.org](http://www.healthybuiltasheville.org)). Our website has an average of 5,000 visits per month, and we want your project to be seen by all those people.

Each project selected will be featured for one month, totaling of 24 featured projects between the two websites. New or renovated residential projects along with commercial projects are eligible to submit.

Our goal is to help show off some of the great green building projects in WNC, improve the look of our site, and raise a little money to help revamp our website.

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 15th, 2009.

Each submission costs \$25 and if chosen, there will be a fee of \$200 to have your project featured for one month with 3 pictures and a link to your business website.

If you would like to have your project(s) considered for feature on our websites, please contact Matt Siegel: [info@wncgbc.org](mailto:info@wncgbc.org) or 828-254-1995.

## 2010 Green Building Directory News

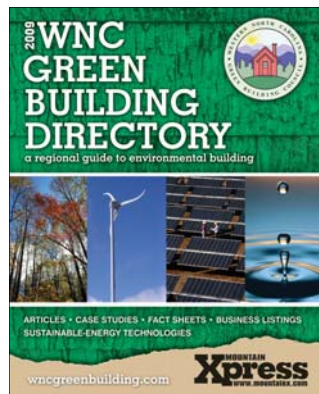
**November 2nd** begins the Early-Bird period for listing and advertising in the 2010 Directory.

General Requirements for being in the directory: must be a current member, Business Level or above.

(See New Directory Requirements for more info, this page)

We're introducing a new listing process this year: you'll fill out the listing form and pay online, all at once. Be sure to add your logo and description!

So sign up today to become a WNCGBC member! ([www.wncgbc.org/membership/join.php](http://www.wncgbc.org/membership/join.php))



## New WNC Green Building Directory Requirements

The WNCGBC Board of Directors has implemented the following requirement changes for any additions to the listings on the online version of the green building directory in 2009 as well as for the 2010 directory listings. These changes are being implemented to create a more objective way to verify green business practices and help to be more fair to all businesses listed in each category.

- Each business will be required to write a short summary of the green products or services that they offer.
- New requirements for both Architects and Residential Designers: Must have a project that has been registered HealthyBuilt Homes or LEED. The owner of the Architect firm must have a NC State Architect's license.
- Builder category: New requirement: Must have registered a project with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification program; such as HealthyBuilt Homes or LEED. (Energy Star does not count). Must have completed at least one building (not necessarily green) that has passed city or county inspections in which your company was the general contractor. Must enter your GC license number when filling out the directory listing form.
- Building Performance Contractors: Requirement: Must be a BPI Accredited Contractor and provide implementation of repairs.
- Consultants: New requirement: Consulting must be the primary focus of your business. If your business lists as a consultant, it cannot list in any other category.
- New Category: Natural and Alternative Building

## Have great photos of green building features?

We want them, for possible inclusion in the 2010 Green Building Directory!

Email [office@wncgbc.org](mailto:office@wncgbc.org) for more information and image specifications.



## 10 Signs of Greenwash

Greenwash is growing. There is no standard or single organization to substantiate these claims, and there are literally hundreds of "Green Labeling" organizations.

The Business for Social Responsibility, a sustainability consulting organization, and Futerra just released a great report on "Understanding and Preventing Greenwash."

Here's their guide to spotting greenwash:

1. Fluffy language: Words or terms with no clear meaning (e.g., "eco-friendly").
2. Green product vs. dirty company: Such as efficient light bulbs made in a factory that pollutes rivers.
3. Suggestive pictures: Green images that indicate a (unjustified) green impact (e.g., flowers blooming from exhaust pipes).
4. Irrelevant claims: Emphasizing one tiny green attribute when everything else is not green.
5. Best in class: Declaring you are slightly greener than the rest, even if the rest are pretty terrible.
6. Just not credible: "Eco friendly" cigarettes, anyone? "Greening" a dangerous product doesn't make it safe.
7. Jargon: Information that only a scientist could check or understand.
8. Imaginary friends: A "label" that looks like third-party endorsement—except that it's made up.
9. No proof: It could be right, but where's the evidence?
10. Outright lying: Totally fabricated claims or data.

## PSNC Discounts & Rebates

### Energy Star Discounts

Natural gas provider PSNC Energy now offers a discount for all Energy Star homes. Residential customers whose homes meet the EPA's Energy Star for New Homes guidelines are eligible for PSNC's Residential Rate Schedule 102, which is a discount of \$0.05 per therm from the otherwise applicable billing rate.

For more information about the residential rate, call 877-776-2427 or visit [www.psnenergy.com/rate102](http://www.psnenergy.com/rate102).

### Get a \$100 Rebate from PSNC

Replace existing natural gas-fired water heating and/or natural gas heating equipment with qualified high-efficient natural gas-fired equipment. Within 90 days of installing the new equipment, submit a completed PSNC Energy rebate form along with an itemized sales receipt, and you may qualify for \$100 rebate applied to your monthly bill.



Additional information and rebate forms are available at [www.psnenergy.com/rebate](http://www.psnenergy.com/rebate).

## Quick Links: Green Building News

### New State Loan Program

In August, the NC Legislature, led by sponsors Susan Fisher, Pricey Harrison, and Ray Rapp, passed a bill that allows counties and municipalities to establish funds to provide low-interest loans for energy efficiency retrofitting and renewable energy generation.

Visit <http://scrutinyhooligans.us/2009/08/10/h1389-a-tool-to-make-asheville-greener> to read the full article.

### Powering Up Energy Efficiency in Schools

Madison County Schools are going green, with windmills, solar photovoltaic panels, and solar hot water heating.

Read all about it: <http://www.greenerbuildings.com/blog/2009/06/15/powering-energy-efficiency-schools>.

### NC Renewable Energy Tax Credits Extended

The North Carolina Renewable Energy Tax Credit has been extended and expanded to include geothermal heat pumps. The 35% tax credits have been extended until the end of 2015.

Eligible renewable energy applications include: Passive Solar Space Heat, Solar Water Heat, Solar Space Heat, Solar Thermal Electric, Solar Thermal Process Heat, Photovoltaics, Wind, Biomass, Hydroelectric, Geothermal Heat Pumps, Solar Pool Heating, Daylighting.

Coupled with Federal Tax credits and several utility rebate programs, the time to install renewable energy is? ... NOW!

For more information on tax credits, go to [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org).

### NC Green Business Fund 2009 Award Winners

Congratulations to **FLS Energy** (Black Mountain) and **Innova Homes** (Asheville) for winning! Visit [http://www.ncscitech.com/gbf/GBF\\_splash.htm](http://www.ncscitech.com/gbf/GBF_splash.htm) for the complete list.



### Recycle Your Used CFLs



Now that you've switched from incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescents (CFLs), you may have had some burn out. Did you know that these light bulbs need to be recycled?

CFLs can use up to 75% less energy than incandescent light bulbs, but it is important to dispose of them properly because of their mercury content. Even though using a CFL saves much more mercury from being released into the air through energy conservation, it is still important to capture what we can and prevent further pollution.

In Buncombe County, residents can drop off used compact and regular fluorescent light bulbs at any of the following participating municipal and volunteer fire departments: Asheville #2 & #11, Beavertown, Black Mountain, Enka-Candler (2 sites), Fairview, Reems Creek, Reynolds, Riceville, Skyland, Swannanoa, and Weaverville.

You can also take CFLs to Home Depot for free recycling (visit <http://www6.homedepot.com/ecoptions/pdf/CFL-RecyclingProgramRevised.pdf> for more information).

#### Options for Business Owners & Property Managers

If your building generates only a small amount of used fluorescent bulbs, recycling can be facilitated through a mail-order program. A recycling company provides you with a container to fill with the used fluorescent bulbs. When it's full, you just mail the container to the company, and they recycle it. The recycling company usually provides pre-paid shipping labels for convenience.

If you need to dispose of larger quantities of fluorescent lights or CFLs, consider contracting a company to recycle your lamps for you.

### A Call to Action: Weatherization Project Celebrates Community & Environmentalism

On October 24, 2009, several non-profits and volunteers from around the community came together at the Burton Street Community Center in West Asheville with one common cause: to weatherize 5 homes and make the winter a little warmer for the residents of those homes.

All 5 of the homes were in close distance to the Burton Street Community Center, making this event possible and hopefully spreading the message of free weatherization services to other qualifying families in that area.

Organized by Americorps Recovery Project Energize volunteers, this project reduced energy bills for low-income families while at the same time reducing excess energy consumption, a main player in global warming. The 12 Americorps Project Energize Members came from throughout WNC and worked through the WNCGBC, NC Interfaith Power & Light, Asheville Green Opportunities, Community Action Opportunities, Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy, Mountain Projects Inc., and Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation and Development.

Americorps Recovery Project Energize has the goal of weatherizing 300 homes in WNC. Also part of the City Block grant of weatherizing 60 homes in a specific low-income West Asheville neighborhood, this project seeks to get the community involved and educated about energy conservation.

October 24, 2009 was a big day for many environmentally conscious organizations: that Saturday was deemed "350 Day." 350 is a global campaign to encourage policy makers to reduce carbon dioxide to 350 parts per million, the number scientists have determined as a safe level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Around the world, concerned citizens did service, learned more about climate change, and all paused for a picture at 3:50 pm. All pictures will be collected as a visual petition to policy makers to make changes needed to meet the 350 goal. Visit <http://www.350.org> for more information.

Visit <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20091025/NEWS01/910250350/1311> to read more about the day and see pictures in the *Asheville Citizen-Times*.

## Queen Branch Cottage: A Case Study in Land Conservation & Historic Renovation with a Green Building Twist

In a south-facing cove where a small stream called Queen Branch meets the Little Tennessee River, the Dean family built their home sometime around 1880. They lived in the house, ran a general store, and farmed the surrounding land for many years, but when plans for a proposed dam on the Little Tennessee River would have submerged the house and much of the property, they decided to sell to the Nantahala Power



Company (now part of Duke Energy). Luckily, the dam was never built, and in 2004, Duke Energy gifted the Queen Branch property to the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee (LTLT). LTLT kept the land directly adjacent to the Little Tennessee River and created the “Queen Branch Preserve” as a place for the public to access and enjoy the river. Then they set about protecting the natural landscape and improving the water quality along the remainder of the Queen Branch by removing invasive non-native plants and several man-made impediments (including a two-seat outhouse that spanned the stream). The folks at LTLT believe that preservation of Southern Appalachian cultural heritage is an important part of their mission so they also decided to save the Queen Branch cottage. To do this, they partnered with the Preservation North Carolina Foundation to find someone to purchase and restore the building according to specific historic guidelines.

That’s where our part of the story begins.

The first time my husband Charlie and I saw Queen Branch cottage with Paul Carlson of LTLT, we were struck by the beauty of the setting, the simple elegance of the house’s details and plan, and by the smart site orientation. The environmental sensitivity, the cultural significance of the site, and the good design of the original house made us think Queen Branch would be a great place to combine historic preservation with green building technologies. And that’s when we decided to embark on a home renovation adventure.

It’s not that we weren’t aware that house was in need of complete renovation including a new water source, septic,

plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems. And, we expected some structural upgrades would be required - the floors bounced and there were some visible signs of termite damage. But I’m an architect and had worked on several complicated renovation projects – so how hard could it be?

We contacted Maggie Leslie at WNCGBC, and learned that the NC HealthyBuilt Homes program accepts gut rehabilitation projects. Then, we asked VandeMusser Design to help us with some green building system design and HERs testing. Before starting the renovation, they suggested getting a baseline reading on the building envelope for a “before” and “after” comparison. When Matt Vande performed the initial blower door test on the house, it was so drafty his equipment wouldn’t give him a proper reading and he ended up having to extrapolate a rating number. Later, Amy Musser helped us to design a new and efficient HVAC system that would fit within the tight physical constraints of the shallow floor framing and the low ceilings of the house.

Then we started the renovation. First, we removed the wallboard and flooring to determine any weak structural areas, and that’s when things got really ugly. The demolition exposed both the inadequacy of the original structure and the full extent of termite-related damage.

The house was not a typical framed structure, but a “plank structure” with exterior walls consisting of 1” thick rough sawn planks nailed to the sides of a platform floor, and upper floor and roof joists set in holes cut into the wall planks. The structure was seriously under-designed by modern standards but it had endured over 100 years of wind and weather, and it might have been salvageable except for the extensive termite damage. Over the years, poor roof drainage and a damp crawlspace had allowed entry for termites to destroy most of the main floor framing and many of the main floor wall planks. Thankfully, sometime in the 1950’s the exterior walls were furred out with 2x4s to hide electrical wiring because that furring was all that was left holding up the house.



Continued on the next page....

## (Queen Branch ... continued)

To restore structural integrity and improve the building envelope, we decided to install new pier foundations and eliminate the enclosed crawlspace; this would also help to reduce the possibility of future termite damage and restored the building to its original look. Working with structural engineer Bernie Feinberg, we figured out a way to retrofit framing for the floors and restructure the walls while keeping the plank walls intact.

Once plans were in place for the structural retrofit it was obvious that the project was too big for us to handle alone, so we asked Ward Griffin of Griffin Realty & Construction to be our general contractor. I had consulted with Ward on a couple of renovation projects in West Asheville and knew he was capable of saving this old house. Ward's crew worked quickly to stabilize the building and then began installing new footings and re-building the floors and adding framing at the interior and exterior bearing walls.

Then with the new structure in place, we were able to concentrate on incorporating green building solutions into the renovation, including: low VOC interior paints; site salvaged and local reclaimed oak flooring; spray foam insulation; site salvaged stone veneer; re-use of the original metal roofing over a new protective roofing; a whole house exhaust system; Energy Star labeled appliances; and a high efficiency heat pump (15.75 SEER and 9 HSPF). A hot water heat pump was installed to improve the efficiency of the electric water heater and help in dehumidification; it also puts out cool air which is distributed across the refrigerator coils to increase that appliance's efficiency. The lighting utilizes CFLs and all exterior lights are Dark Sky rated. The toilet and bathroom faucet are low flow, Water Sense labeled fixtures. The air handler and all ductwork are located in the conditioned space to improve efficiency; and the existing, historic windows were restored with new weather stripping added. And, Shawn White from Pisgah Pest Control developed a site-specific solution for termite control that will protect the house in a way that would be effective in the rocky site soil, non-toxic to humans and animals, and safe for the nearby stream.

The house is still a work in progress, and we hope to complete the final testing for the Healthy Built program and Energy Star certification soon. But for now, we're happy to have the house habitable again, and proud to think that the green building technologies employed in this historic renovation will ensure Queen Branch cottage is still around in another 100 years.

Diana Bellgowan is an architect based in Asheville; she can be reached at:

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## A Market for Green Buildings in Asheville

It is no big secret that it was a rough and tumble year in the national real estate market. Many of the woes the national market has been facing for some time finally found their way to the local Asheville, NC market in the 4th quarter of 2008.

Perhaps the only positive trend in the 2008 market, locally and nationally, was the continued growth of the green building sector. Integration of green building principles and practices industry-wide continue to expand into new locations, price ranges, styles, and across new and sometimes unexpected demographics.

For example, we saw a major upswing locally in the number of Asheville area retirees entering the green buyer pool, in some part due to the recent instability of the energy prices. Historically, green buyers have tended to be a younger, urban, progressive group, so this was a noteworthy departure from previous assumptions.

Trends such as this illuminate how pervasive and broadly accepted the principles of green building are becoming in the general market. Within the city limits of Asheville it is clear that, in the very near future, any builder not incorporating green building principles into their process is going to be taking a serious risk in terms losing touch with this market.

At EcoHouse Realty, we do a semi-annual statistical analysis of the green building market and its relation to the general market in Asheville. The trends of the 2008 year end analysis were very telling in terms of the growth of green building in our local market. Some of the highlights:

- 45% of all new construction sold in the city limits were green built
- In West Asheville, 10% of ALL sales, including resales, were green built
- Among homes in the city priced under \$500,000, green built homes sold nearly twice as quickly

The trends clearly show not only the higher desirability of green built homes to the buyer, but considering the relatively recent nature of the concept of green building in the public lexicon, the rate of growth and the market share that is currently being garnered by the green built products is significant. This rapid growth seems to indicate that it is inevitable that green built product will eventually become the new standard in the construction industry, and, depending on the nature of each individual local market, seemingly in short order.

Within the city limits of Asheville it would seem that the majority of new homes sold will have some form of green certification by the end of 2009.

Continued on the next page....



## Green Building in Asheville....continued

Local builders and realtors have clearly noticed this trend and have been making rapid adjustments to stay current with demand. Considering how much smaller the buyer pool and, consequently, how competitive the marketplace has become (January 2008 to January 2009, sales volume is off more than 50%, per WNCRMLS ), it would seem foolhardy to ignore these market elements. Why take the unnecessary risk of alienating this, perhaps the only, growing buyer pool by building “to code”, especially when recent studies clearly indicate most buyers are willing to pay several thousands more for same home built green?

The buyers of “code built” vs “green built” homes are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but when examined, I believe it only further illuminates the wisdom of heading towards building green in a committed fashion.

I have found many traditional buyers will readily buy a well designed and constructed green home, and generally will see the green elements of the home as an added bonus. Conversely, many, if not most, of my green buyers will not look at “code built” homes at all, no matter how they present.

Green builders have an additional advantage, one that I believe many buyers “sense”, but do not really consciously understand. Most green builders have had to intentionally deconstruct and redesign their construction process to balance conflicting factors, material qualities, to meet the criteria of checklist certifications in addition to the code, to try and incorporate smart design and efficient processes when at all possible, and by doing so, by nature, simply become more diligent and conscientious builders.

This aside, with increased marketability, half the average market time, and buyers willing to pay premium prices, I see no logical reason why every builder in the market would not be headed in this direction—quickly.

But beware—do not underestimate the sophistication of these buyers. They are not easily fooled by builders or brokers just paying lip service to building green as a marketing ploy, and they seem able to sniff out “greenwashed” projects quickly. Green buyers tend to have higher levels of education and we have found they tend to do a lot of independent research prior to even contacting a builder, broker or architect.

Green buyers tend to fall into a number of different categories based on what elements of green building are important to them specifically. Each group has slightly different motivations and desires in why they want a green built home. More and more, this requires a level of semi-customization individual to each buyer.

Buyers have also become very budget conscious, and only want to buy the green features and upgrades that fit their

specific needs, so care must be taken to know your potential buyers well and be judicious with your green features if you plan to build spec. Many of my builder clients have begun to offer a “base package” with standard green features (green techniques and equipment they would use on any home they built) and set a baseline price for the home at this level. From there, we work to develop an a la carte menu of upgrades for both our green features and finish packages.

This strategy insulates the builder from spending “dead money” on features the eventual buyer did not desire, and therefore does not want to pay for. It allows the buyer to customize the green features of the home to suit their specific goals (air quality, energy efficiency, universal design, etc). In much the same concept of “selecting your colors” as a buyer incentive, this strategy offers the buyer the opportunity to participate in customizing the home in a way that not only reduces the builder’s risk, but increases the buyer’s motivation and emotional commitment to the property. It also keeps the initial base price down to make the property accessible to as many potential buyers as possible.

Do your homework. Know your buyers. Build consciously and be sensitive to the balance of all these factors, and there is still room for growth, even in these seemingly difficult times. Take advantage of the opportunity to rethink the way you build and market your property, and streamline your operation for increased future success. Green building, at its most basic level, is about efficiency and balance, which can serve you well in all your business and building endeavors.

Statistics and supporting data via WNCRMLS, with statistical analysis courtesy of EcoHouse Realty, Asheville, NC.

For more information, please contact:  
David Mosrie  
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6 Celebration Place  
Asheville, NC 28806  
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# Special Thanks to Platinum Members of the WNCGBC!



[www.haywoodbuilders.com](http://www.haywoodbuilders.com)

Haywood Builders Supply has been serving WNC for over 5 decades. In addition to our Full Service

Building Supply in Waynesville (Haywood Builders Supply), we now proudly offer our specialized design services in Asheville and Sylva. We're helping our customers be GREEN as well as working to make our own company as

100 Charles Street  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
828-456-6051

[anewland@haywoodbuilders.com](mailto:anewland@haywoodbuilders.com)

GREEN as can be. We're constantly training to better serve you in your building supply/design needs

and are proud to announce we have earned the titles of "Certified Green Dealer" & "Entrepreneur of the Year 2008" by LBM Journal.



6 Bridgestone Rd  
Swannanoa, NC 28778  
828-712-1518  
[brandon@redtreebuilders.com](mailto:brandon@redtreebuilders.com)

[www.redtreebuilders.com](http://www.redtreebuilders.com)

Red Tree is committed to building Asheville and surrounding WNC custom, quality, green homes. We are a builder that offers a Change to the old way of building homes; a more efficient, sustainable, smarter, and green alternative with our system-engineered homes.



Preish Construction, Inc. promotes sustainable building practices, focusing on creating homes of exceptional craftsmanship that will last centuries.

Through utilization of today's modern, renewable-energy technologies, we are committed in action, as well as deed, to

[www.Preish.com](http://www.Preish.com)

construct healthy, energy-efficient, environmentally conscious homes. Jim Preish and Mallory Fuller become personally involved in all projects, ensuring no details are overlooked. We have the experience from nearly three decades of successful building to manage your project, exceed expectations, finish on-time, and within the expected budget.

PO Box 1330  
Enka, NC 28728  
828-776-4444  
[homes@preish.com](mailto:homes@preish.com)



Energy Conservation Specialists

is committed to residential and commercial building practices that address energy efficiency, comfort, indoor air quality, and durability. We are a locally owned and operated company that provides the highest quality energy upgrades. Our primary services consist of certified and detailed home energy ratings, closed cell spray foam insulation, solar water heating, and new construction energy modeling and consultation.

12 All Souls Crescent  
Asheville, NC 28803  
828-713-9433  
[noahjinj07@aol.com](mailto:noahjinj07@aol.com)

TMH brought together a comprehensive group of designers, architects, developers, builders, suppliers and banks to help simplify the building



Log & Timber Homes • Land • Interior • Sales & Contracting  
Good for People - Good for the Earth

process. The goal is [www.TimelessMountainHomes.com](http://www.TimelessMountainHomes.com) to provide you with all you desire in your dream home. We work with environmentally respectful designs whether log, timber, panelized or a traditionally built home. We use age-old practices and the latest in technological advancements including those designed to minimize energy consumption while maintaining respect for the environment. TMH makes your dream a reality by understanding and respecting your

2 E. Market St, Ste. E  
Black Mountain, NC 28711  
877-669-5557

[timelessmountainhomes@usa.net](mailto:timelessmountainhomes@usa.net)

needs and desires by keeping communications open and consistent. TMH builds HealthyBuilt and

LEED certified homes exclusively.

Driven by a legacy founded on quality, innovation and trust, Biltmore Farms approaches home and community building with a simple goal: To build homes, not just houses. We are a company looking ahead even while we are sensitively aware of our immediate surroundings and environmental impact.



**BILTMORE FARMS<sup>SM</sup>**  
HOMES

[www.biltmorefarmshomes.com](http://www.biltmorefarmshomes.com)

One Town Square, Suite 320  
Asheville, NC 28803  
828-209-2000  
[bdebruin@biltmorefarmshomes.com](mailto:bdebruin@biltmorefarmshomes.com)

Biltmore Farms currently offers HealthyBuilt Homes and communities good for both the homeowner and our environment.

For more information on Platinum membership benefits and to see a full list of WNCGBC Platinum members, visit:  
[www.wncgbc.org/membership/business.php](http://www.wncgbc.org/membership/business.php)