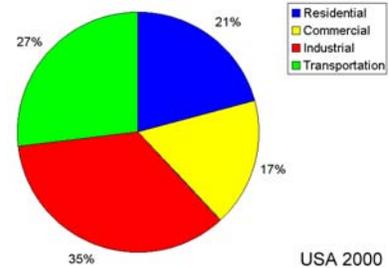




## Three Basic Steps to High Performance Product Selection

Many people do not realize that they can have a significant, powerful impact on the health of their family and the planet through the materials and products they select for their home. According to a study by the Worldwatch Institute<sup>i</sup>, 40% of the world's materials and energy are used by buildings and 30% of newly-built or -renovated buildings suffer from "sick building syndrome," exposing occupants to potentially unhealthy air. Your home can be different.



### Choosing Products

Selecting high performance materials and products for your home can go a long way to achieving a healthier house, but it can also feel intimidating and overwhelming. Therefore when choosing a product for your new or existing home, it is important that you consider four key questions:

1. **Why you are using a product?**
2. **What do you want the product to do?**
3. **What are the most important selection qualities and requirements?**
4. **What will be the product's use in the home?**

Here are some basic steps that you can follow to assist you in making a decision:

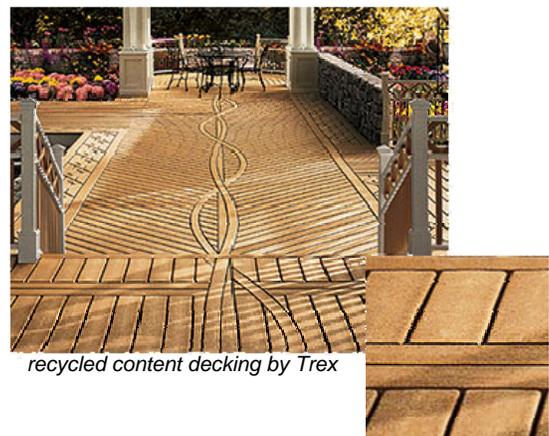
### Step 1: Create a QR List

Create a list of **Qualities and/or Requirements (QR)** that a product may need to meet. Then, prioritize the list from most important to least important, allowing the most important characteristics to guide you in your **Research** for potential products.

**Remember:** In a NC HealthyBuilt Home, consider people and the environment as well as economics.

### Potential considerations for QR that a product may need to meet:

- Created locally
- Recyclable
- Made of recycled/easily grown materials
- Durable
- Visible/Invisible
- Aesthetics
- Non- or low-toxic
- Weather resistant





## Step 2: Research

Gather all potential products technical information that may meet your requirements and that you are willing to consider. Some of this technical information may include:

- Manufacturers' information such as Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
- Product Certification or Labeling
- Product warranties
- Recycled content data
- Environmental statements
- Durability information



*Energy Star label for homes and appliances  
[US Environmental Protection Agency and the  
US Department of Energy]*

## Step 3: Selection

- Ask Supplier for references to those who have used the product
- Understand warranty and support services for the product
- Confirm availability and support network for a product in your area
- Confirm cost of material
- Confirm installation requirements and costs
- If you are a builder and using new “green” products, add products gradually to your arsenal
- If you are a homeowner or buyer, make sure that your builder is willing to install the product

***Healthier products and materials are available on the market today!***

<sup>i</sup> Worldwatch Paper #124: A Building Revolution: How Ecology and Health Concerns Are Transforming Construction, David Malin Roodman and Nicholas Lenssen, March 1995

<sup>ii</sup> Graph courtesy of ACCENT online magazine, [http://www.atmosphere.mpg.de/enid/0\\_55a304092d09/Nr2June05\\_Context\\_4pu.html](http://www.atmosphere.mpg.de/enid/0_55a304092d09/Nr2June05_Context_4pu.html)

For more information about green products and residential building, visit:



[www.healthybuilthomes.org](http://www.healthybuilthomes.org)