

Define Green Building; is this the same as environmentally friendly building?

Green Building is a name used to talk about the large field of environmentally friendly building and energy efficiency, as well as Land use and development. It also gives us a place to talk about those materials that may inherently be not so environmentally friendly yet can play a substantial role in the durability or use of a structure or the land it occupies. Because the concept of Green is being applied to so many different industries, it is not limited to just building and frees us up to look at the many different aspects of Green and how than can be incorporated in our lives. I would have to say then, that while the two are similar, I believe that they are not the same thing.

To define Green Building, the group that I have been working with has come up with this:

"A system that is inherently centered on five key concepts that best represent green building and sustainable design: Energy Efficiency, Resource Efficiency and Use (including durability and embodied energy), Indoor Environmental Quality, Water Conservation, Site management and Use."

We use those concepts to address the following areas:

- **High Performance Building Envelope and Systems** (insulation, renewable energy, roofing, foundation, sheathing, structural, other)
- **Mechanicals** (lighting fixtures, lighting plan, plumbing, electrical, appliances, indoor water systems, fans, HVAC, etc.)
- **Natural Light and Ventilation** (skylights, windows, light tubes, HVAC)
- **Finishes and Trim** (exterior & interior) (flooring and floor covering, paint, coatings, sealants, millwork, adhesives, wall coverings, siding, drywall)
- **Waste Management** (C&D reduction, reuse, recycling)
- **Outdoor Projects/Site/Land Use** (landscaping materials, site protection, decking, paving systems, storm water capture and management systems, active community development)
- **Education** (homeowner, contractor, subcontractors)
- **Innovation** (cutting edge systems, approaches, and products)