



## Sustainable Style

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The economy has contributed to the demand for salvaged, energy-efficient design elements, says Tim Campbell, a product manager at Metropolitan Regional Information Systems (MRIS.com), which runs the country's largest real estate listing service and monitors market trends. Recently, he says, "everybody's much more conscious of their energy bills and of their footprint on the environment."

Nadia Subaran, senior designer, co-founder and co-owner of Aidan Design architecture firm (4701 Sangamore Road, Suite 3, Bethesda; 301-320-8735, Aidandesign.com), would agree. Adding green materials to the home is "a part of every client conversation I have [now], whereas five years ago, it was maybe one in 10," she says. "I think it's due to greater social awareness. People are much more conscious of the choices they make. I think that everybody feels that they have, in their own small way, a power to influence or to affect by their choices."

There's not much data on the effect of eco-friendly features on overall home values, largely because green technologies continue to evolve. However, houses with perks such as LEED certification, recycled design elements and Energy Star appliances tend to sell for more money than non-green homes, according to a 2009 study by the Earth Advantage

Institute of homes in Portland, Ore. Eco-friendly homes also spend about 10 fewer days on the market, according to Campbell.

It all comes down to basic supply-and-demand economics, Campbell says. As consumers become more interested in preserving the planet through their property choices, "builders start building homes and communities using those green features, and using them as selling points for their marketing."

Bethesda-based Rill Architects (4833 Rugby Avenue, Suite 501; 301-656-4166, Rillarchitects.com) exemplifies this trend. "Our real

### Green Guidance

#### How to LEED By Example

A Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification means that the U.S. Green Building Council (Usgbc.org) has vetted a property based on nine measures of eco-friendliness, including building design, construction, materials and energy efficiency. There are four levels of LEED certification—certified, silver, gold and platinum—based on a point system of up to 100 for the nine areas. Points are awarded for how certain features will help the environment, especially when it comes to energy efficiency and carbon dioxide reductions. S.K.



## Revel In the (Green) Details

Recycled material homes eco-friendly

### Decor

For Jeremy Richardson, there's a clear distinction between work and home. A contractor at the Department of Engineering Technologies Program (which focuses on making buildings more energy efficient), he says that having a sustainable apartment is practically a job requirement for him to have a sustainable apartment.

"The chance to live in a more efficient space is one of the things that motivated me to move," says Richardson, 36, who lives in a condo containing repurposed materials. "I have a passion for Petworth's Solidago building in Washington, D.C. It's a passion of mine to live in a way that's kinder to the planet."

Built in 1917 with two units, the building was renovated over the past two years into three condos. Half of the construction materials were recycled, saving 7 tons from landfill fodder. The building earned LEED platinum certification, the highest level of eco-friendliness recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council.

While LEED certification is a good indicator that a home is gentle on the Earth, the details of a home are so subtle. Recycled and sustainable décor can be eye-catching, conversation-starting, and it's become a trend as both