

General Information on Health and Safety

Sustainable Design Websites Reviewed by Nancy Chwiecko

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I found the following sites very good or excellent. I know there are many more – when you find them let me know!

Some good search words or phrases include “green building materials”, “green products”, "sustainability", "sustainable design", "sustainable building materials or products", "universal design", "visitability", "socially responsible design"

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCT GUIDES And RESOURCES.

Site: Center for Resourceful Building Technology **Location:** Missoula, Montana

URL: www.crbt.org

This site helps educate designers and consumers about sustainable design. It includes selection criteria for materials and a resource list of products. It has a lot of reading info. It also has direct links to manufacturers.

Site: Environmental Building News **Location:** Brattleboro, Vermont

URL: www.BuildingGreen.com

This is the website for the magazine *Environmental Building News* and the resource guide *Green Specs Guid*. Although this site is a business – magazine and guide above they do not supplement the business with advertisements which makes them an unbiased source of information. Although much of the site is subscriber access only, they do give away a lot of free information and provide links for further research.

Site: Green Building Initiative **Location:** Portland, OR

URL: www.thegbi.com

General resource for information about finishes and materials with product links.

Site: Green Resource Center **Location:** Berkeley, CA

URL: www.greenresourcecenter.org

General resource for information about finishes and materials with product links.

Site: The Healthy Building Network (HBN)

URL: www.healthbuilding.net

"The Healthy Building Network (HBN) is a national network of green building professionals, environmental and health activists, socially responsible investment advocates and others who are interested in promoting healthier building materials as a means of improving public health and preserving the global environment."

Site: National American Home Builders Research Center

URL: www.nahbrc.org

Find the green building link that leads to green programs around the country. Download the new green building guidelines.

Site: Whole Building Design Guide **Location:**

URL: www.wbdg.org

Good resource for information on evaluating and selecting green products.

GREEN PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

Site: The Consumers Union Guide to Environmental Labels.

URL: www.eco-labels.org

A source for comparing and understanding the different labels that are used to qualify something as “green”.

Site: Energy Star

Location: Washington, DC

URL: www.energystar.gov

ENERGY STAR is a partner with the EPA and is a government-backed program which certifies and labels energy efficient appliances and homes.

Site: Forest Stewardship Council

Location:

URL: www.fscus.org

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a non-profit organization that certifies that wood used in wood products will come from forests that are managed in the most sustainable manner.

FSC uses 3 certifiers for US wood products: they are Smartwood Program, SGS Systems and Services Certification and SCS Scientific Certification Systems.

Site: Greenguard

Location:

URL: www.greenguard.org

GreenGuard is a third-party organization that certifies low emitting interior products and building materials. Products include flooring, paint, wall finishes and other interior building products.

Site: GreenSeal

Location:

URL: www.greenseal.org

Green Seal is an independent non-profit organization that evaluates products that have less impact on the environment. Currently products certified include paint, carpet, air conditioners, paper, cleaners, windows and appliances

INDOOR AIR QUALITY WEBSITES

Site: Aerias Air Quality Sciences

Location:

URL: www.aerias.org

A comprehensive and very informative website dedicated to indoor air quality. Subjects include products, allergies, testing, asthma and a lot more.

Site: Plants for Clean Air Council

Location: Davidsonville, Maryland

URL: www.plants4cleanair.org

This site is devoted to the research of one scientist. His name is Dr. Bill Wolverton, a senior research scientist at NASA, who studied plant and pollution treatment for the past 20 years. This site includes his research and the results. I believe there may be other sites devoted to the same topic, but I have not done a search at this point.

WATER QUALITY

Site: Drinking Water Resources

URL: cyber-nook.com/water/index

Good resource for information about water quality and problems.

See also EPA.gov or CDC.gov listed below.

ENERGY

Site: Department of Energy (DOE)

URL: www.eere.energy.gov

This site contains information on energy.

Site: Energy Star

Location: EPA, Washington, DC

URL: www.energystar.gov

This is an educational site devoted to energy efficiency in the building trades. It has a very complete listing of products for homes and businesses. Products include appliances, HVAC, equipment and lighting.

Site: New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)

URL: www.nyserda.org

Includes information about energy efficiency, indoor air quality and other environmental issues.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

Site: Building for Environmental and Economic Sustainability (BEES)

Location: National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

URL: www.bfrl.nist.gov/oa/software/BEES

Includes evaluations of building products for sustainability and energy. Copies may be ordered for free from this website, in CD format or printed format. Highly recommended

Site: Building and Fire Research Laboratory (BRFL)

URL: www.bfrl.nist.gov

And

Site: National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

URL: www.nist.gov

Both of the above sites provide information critical to the design professions. Information includes testing, programs and activities.

Site: Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

URL: www.cdc.org

Has important information relative to indoor air quality and other health hazards in your home and other buildings.

Site: Department of Energy (DOE)

URL: www.eere.energy.gov

This site contains information on energy.

Site: Energy Star

Location: EPA, Washington, DC

URL: www.energystar.gov

This is an educational site devoted to energy efficiency in the building trades. It has a very complete listing of products for homes and businesses. Products include appliances, HVAC, equipment and lighting.

Site: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

URL: www.epa.gov

This is a general site run by the EPA with links to activities, programs and a lot of information. For example if you go to this site and click on Pollutants/Toxics you will find many resources on lead point and lead poisoning. There are brochures to download or order.

Site: Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

URL: www.hud.gov

Oversees issues relating to housing including discrimination in housing, low-income housing and access to housing.

Site: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
Green Building Council)

Location: USGBC (United States

URL: www.usgbc.org/LEED

LEED is a national standard for developing high performance sustainable buildings. Design professionals can receive certification in LEED.

Site: United States Green Building Council (USGBC)

URL: www.usgbc.org

This is a general site run by the USGBC with links to activities and programs (such as LEED)

GENERAL INFORMATION WEBSITES

Site: Cradle to Cradle, Bill McDonough, Michael Braungart

URL: www.cradletocradle.com

This is the MBDC McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry website but it has some good links and information.

Site: Consumer Reports

URL: www.consumerreports.org

Although most of the information on this site is accessed through subscription, there is still plenty of information available for free.

Site: Environmental Design Library

Location: Berkeley, CA (Berkeley Environmental Design Library)

URL: www.lib.berkeley.edu/ENVI/GreenAll.html

This site is actually a research aid and includes bibliography of books related to Environmental Design and Sustainable Design. The library is physically located on the Berkeley campus. Within the bibliographies are website listings with links to the sites.

Site: Environmental Working Group (EWG)

URL: www.ewg.org

According to the website "Environmental investigations have been our specialty at the Environmental Working Group since 1993." EWG uses scientific research and a host of experts to investigate and expose environmental problems.

Site: Global Green USA

URL: www.globalgreen.org

General information on environmental issues.

Site: Green Blue

URL: www.greenblue.org

A new initiative for education by William McDonough

Site: Green Architect

Location: unknown

URL: www.archrecord.com/GREEN/GREEN.ASP

This site is recommended by Environmental Building News. It includes articles and a green product guide. The site is part of the magazine Architectural Record so the information is credible. It uses the CSI Format and provides product links direct to manufacturers.

Site: National Resources Defense Council

Location: New York, NY

URL: www.nrdc.org

NRDC is a wealth of environmental information. They have a "Take Action" link which sends you updates about important legislation, actions and events. You can respond to government and corporate officials with prewritten letters.

Site: National Home Builders Research Center.

URL: www.nahbrc.org

Look for the green building link that leads to green building programs around the country. Download the homebuilding guide.

Site: Rocky Mountain Institute

Location: Boulder, Colorado

URL: www.rmi.org

This site is devoted to research about environmental issues, including sustainable design and building. But they are also interested in energy alternatives both in building and in transportation. They have written numerous books, which can be bought through this site.

Site: Sustainable Architecture Building & Culture

Location: Santa Barbara, California

URL: www.SustainableABC.com

This site is for the true believers of sustainability. An architect who seems to be very committed to sustainability organizes it. The site serves as a link to other sites that include definitions of terminology and practices. Although this is a truly focused sustainable site it seems oriented towards California.

Site: Trans Studio

URL: www.transstudio.com

This website will change the way we design things in the future. It will open your minds up to new materials and new possibilities. The best way to view this website is by downloading the PDF files and creating a book to look at.

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

Site: Dharma Living Systems **Location:** Santa Fe, NM

URL: www.dharmalivingsystems.com

Formerly called Living Machines, this is the website of a company that designs and builds wastewater and sewage treatment plants that are made of biological components such as plants.

Site: Eco Products

Location: Boulder, Colorado

URL: www.ecoproducts.com

This is a website for a retail business located in Boulder. It details a very limited number of products that can't be ordered on-line. While it is interesting to find retail businesses, this one might be too limited to be of much help.

Site: Oikos

Location: Lorane, Oregon

URL: www.oikos.com

This site serves as a link to sustainable product resources, manufacturers and retail outlets. The products are listed by categories, "green" certifications, environmental benefits and the type of company. It includes categories on the entire CSI format. The only drawback is that some of the company links do not include websites, instead addresses or phone numbers are given. Our website is linked to this site.

Site: Sample Room

Location: Canada

URL: www.sampleroom.buygreen.com

The Canadian government sponsored this source. It includes an extensive list of product suppliers in Canada and the US. There is also some good information on selecting appropriate materials. I found the graphics a bit distracting – the home page had too much info and it's not well designed.

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE WEBSITES

Site: Rugmark

URL: www.rugmark.org

and

Site: Care & Fair

URL: www.care-fair.org

Rugmark is a nonprofit organization that is working to end illegal child labor in the carpet industry. Rugs with the Rugmark label are a sign of their approval.

Site: Socially Responsible Design

URL: www.sociallyresponsibledesign.org

Not a completely developed site yet.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN, ADA AND VISITABILITY

Site: Architecture and Planning University at Buffalo **Location:** Buffalo, NY

URL: www.ap.buffalo.edu/idea

Focus on both universal design and visitability with some good links to other sites.

Site: Concrete Change **Location:** Toledo, OH

URL: www.concretechange.org

"an international effort to make all new homes visitable"

Site: Department of Justice American's with Disabilities Act (ADA)

URL: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada

The official government site for ADA

Site: United States Access Board

URL: www.access-board.gov

A federal agency committed to Universal Design. Maintains the most current ADA regulations.