

Award-Winning Coverage of Sustainable Construction, Products and Lifestyles

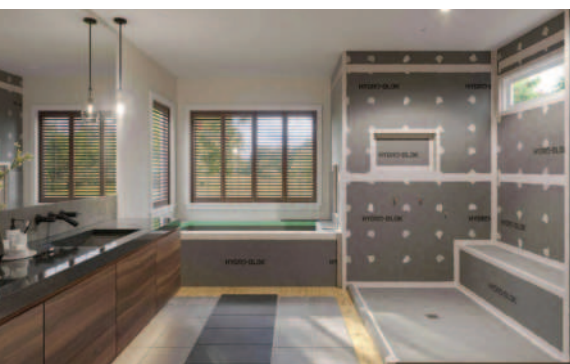
GREEN BUILDER®

March/April 2026 / www.greenbuildermedia.com



— 2026 —
GREEN BUILDER®
SUSTAINABLE
PRODUCTS OF
THE YEAR

Fierce Momentum: Despite political efforts to roll back product sustainability, product makers keep evolving. This year's top collection of new and improved products suggests that homebuilding's future looks more efficient, more renewable and more durable.





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Dear America: Please Cancel the War on Solar



Whatever your views toward America's military adventurism, it seems beyond debate that we need a mass solar conversion more than ever.

won't bore you with my views about Washington's recent military adventurism. I know that you, our readers, have strong opinions about this. I think the end result will shape how all of us "feel" about this anxious moment in our lives.

I'd be cowardly in my mission, as a journalist and advocate for more sustainable building, however, not to call out one indisputable lesson from the last few weeks.

Our fossil fuel dependence makes us vulnerable.

Oil and gas prices are spiking at every street corner. But things seem even worse across the pond. The United Kingdom, India and other countries have come close to depleting their entire reserves of natural gas. But don't count our good fortune too soon. We're simply further downstream from many supply chains.

To really understand this, we have to look past the simple metric of gasoline prices. Fossil fuels impact almost every aspect of modern living: medicine, transportation, food prices (try making fertilizer without fossil fuel), construction materials, shipping—it's hard to think of anything higher oil prices DON'T affect.

There is one exception. Fossil fuels don't affect the operational costs of homes or communities that already have solar energy and battery storage installed. Sure, you may still pay more for food. But you can drive your electric car for free, run heat pumps for free, keep the refrigerator running for free. You're not hanging on every "tweet" from a politician to find out whether your home is about to get very, very cold (or hot) tonight.

Solar has been the fastest category of energy production installed in the U.S. over the past year. But our government seems determined to kneecap the industry. Some conspiracists suggest that the anti-solar crusade was planned. Frankly, I don't think the people in charge are that smart. Much of what they do seems driven by impulse and the promise of another quick buck, not a "long game" strategy.

As you may know, Washington terminated the [Residential](#)

[Clean Energy Credit \(Section 25D\)](#) at the end of 2025. The government has also reduced eligibility for several Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) incentives supporting solar and renewable power projects. At the same time, it's clawed back federal money for solar incentives, including programs such as the \$7 billion "Solar for All" initiative aimed at expanding solar in low-income communities. These efforts were halted or terminated because they supported "the scam of the century."

Meanwhile, the Pentagon [spent about \\$6 billion on the first week of the Iran attack](#). Depending on how long the oil-influenced "Operation Epic Fury" lasts, U.S. taxpayers could be footing a bill of \$200 billion or more. Solar energy really sounds like a bargain.

China, one of Washington's favorite adversaries, is churning out solar panels and accessories at unfathomable speed, with ample government support. This helps explain why China's recent export growth (roughly 22 percent) blows away U.S. export growth (only about 6 percent). China also runs a large (and growing) surplus, while the U.S. has a rapidly increasing structural trade deficit.

Imagine a political pivot to support and embrace the solar revolution. Throw in some wind farms, and maybe a few of the new (presumably safer) small-scale nuclear reactors. Would we still be invading places like Venezuela and Iran? Couldn't those billions spent on missiles and bombs be spent on solar subsidies?

Renewable power is not political. It's simply sensible. Combined with battery storage, it's ready to push oil back where it belongs: in the annals of history. Let's talk sense to the people who represent us. Tell them to get on board with the future—or get out of the way. **GB**



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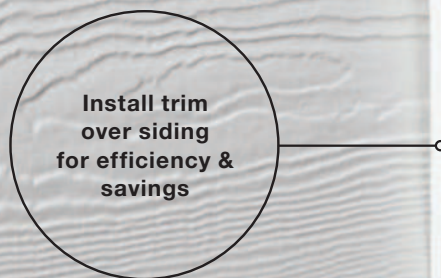
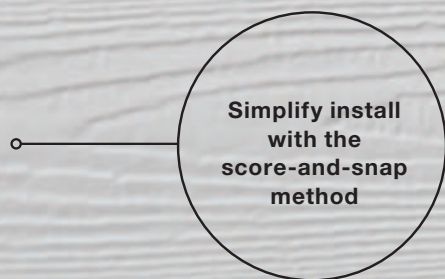
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MISSION STATEMENT: "Our mission is to effect meaningful, positive change for a better world. As advocates for sustainability, we provide mind-expanding information that catalyzes and inspires commitment to sustainable living."



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*Compared to butt-to trim installation. Average installation rate determined using a standardized wall design. Actual rates vary by wall complexity and crew experience.
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VISION HOUSE HICKORY GROVE: MAKING CONNECTIONS

The right partners keep sustainability and affordability at the forefront of this North Carolina workforce housing development.



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“Renewable power is not political. Combined with battery storage, it’s ready to push oil back where it belongs: in the annals of history.”

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Award-Winning Ventilation for High-Performance Homes



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Intelli-Balance® Elite Series Plus ERV has been recognized as a **2026 Sustainable Product of the Year** by *Green Builder Media* — honoring innovation that elevates indoor air quality, efficiency, and long-term home performance.

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MAKING IT RIGHT

BY ALAN NADITZ

When it comes to Green Builder's "Sustainable Products of the Year" lineup for 2026, it's all about creativity. Whether we're talking about appliances or recycled glass-supported concrete, sustainability's benefits to a home and its owners are as important as how a product is made. Our 2026 roster includes items that demonstrate how environmentally friendly products promote healthy living. For veteran companies, reappearing on our list reinforces their sustainability commitments. For first timers, it's a chance to demonstrate their dedication to green living.



Appliances



Whirlpool KitchenAid 360° Max Jets Third Rack Dishwasher with ProDry System

This KitchenAid dishwasher's sustainability profile is built on energy and water efficiency, intelligent resource management, and solving common household inefficiencies. The core sustainability feature is its *Energy Star V7 Certification*, meaning it exceeds government standards for energy efficiency, supports environmental goals and reduces user utility costs. Its overall design integrates technologies that prevent wasteful operation, optimizing performance across every cycle.

The unit's *Automatic Door Open Dry System* achieves an energy-efficient dry by automatically opening the door four inches post-cycle. Instead, the machine relies on natural ventilation, significantly reducing energy usage compared to continuous use of a heating element.

In addition, the *ProWash Cycle* uses sensors to measure soil levels and dynamically adapts the wash time and water temperature, ensuring that only the necessary amount of energy is used for any load.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.KITCHENAID.COM

SKS 36-inch Integrated Column Freezer and Refrigerator

The SKS 36-inch *Column Refrigerator and Column Freezer* combines premium design, advanced performance, and intelligent technology with sustainability-driven innovation.

Designed as a fully integrated, flush-installed system, the columns provide generous storage capacity while maintaining a seamless architectural aesthetic.

At the sustainable design's core is a spacious, bead-blasted, all-metal interior engineered to maintain temperatures within 1 degree Fahrenheit. This precise temperature control preserves freshness longer, helping reduce food waste. Adjustable shelving, *Lift and Go* bins, and soft-close doors enhance usability while helping maintain stable internal temperatures and minimizing energy loss.

The unit's *ThinQ* platform functions as an energy command center, offering monitoring tools, usage analytics, and remote management capabilities. And the *AI Fresh Technology* learns household routines and automatically adjusts cooling performance, anticipating high-use periods while conserving energy during low activity times.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.SKSAPPLIANCES.COM



LG Induction Single Smart Range with Air Fry

The LG 6.3-cubic-foot *Induction Single Smart Range with Air Fry, ProBake Convection, EasyClean, Self-Clean and Premium Handle (LRIN6323YE)* combines professional performance, smart technology, and modern design in a versatile appliance built for efficient everyday cooking.

Key features include *ProBake Convection*, which uses a dual-speed fan for even heat distribution and more efficient cooking, and an integrated *Air Fry* mode that creates crispy results with little to no oil—reducing extra appliances and energy use. Smart connectivity available through LG *ThinQ* enables remote control, guided cooking, maintenance alerts via *ThinQ Care*, and energy-conscious monitoring.

Standout sustainability highlights include induction technology for faster, more energy efficient heat transfer, multifunction cooking capabilities that reduce the need for multiple appliances, and *EasyClean* technology that cleans with water in just 10 minutes, minimizing harsh chemicals and lowering energy use.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://WWW.LG.COM/US/INDUCTION-COOKTOPS](https://www.lg.com/us/induction-cooktops)



Fotile 3-in-1 In-Sink Dishwasher

Fotile's ENERGY Star certified 3-in-1 In-Sink Dishwasher features an *Intelligent 360° Cleaning System*, high-temperature sanitization, and pasteurizing convection drying to ensure that dishes come out spotless, safe, and completely dry—no towel needed. It's also a water miser, using only 1.6 gallons per cycle—compared to 3 to 6 gallons from models by competitors—during its powerful cleaning performance.

The unit's rotary sprays and all-angle water spray design enable the dishwasher's contents get thoroughly washed and rinsed without blind spots. The dishwasher accurately calculates the water jet's spray and angles to create a water-fall-like blanket for thorough deep cleaning.

There's also a health benefit. A unique heating element heats the water up to 158 degrees, eliminating 99.99 percent of E Coli Staphylococcus Aureus and other common bacteria from dishes and tableware.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://US.FOTILEGLOBAL.COM](https://us.fotileglobal.com)



Bathroom Fixtures



ShowerPot Water Recycling Bins *Holdster* Recycling Toilet

The battle against the global water crisis begins at home. The ShowerPot Foundation has a simple and effective way to help that cause. The nonprofit domestically produces the world's first and only *Recycling Bins for Water*, a three-piece tool that encourages efficient water use on different levels.

With a "*Holdster*," a user can repurpose greywater from a shower, reducing waste from 10 to 25 gallons to as little as 2 gallons per use. Meanwhile, a *Holdster* can make an existing low-flow toilet even more efficient by enabling a user to turn off the tap water supply entirely or keep it as a backup. Reduced water usage saves the homeowner money, lessens the strain on the local water supply, and cuts the amount of energy needed by a city to process and transport water.

Many cities offer *Holdsters* to homeowners for free. And, all *Holdsters* are made from recycled and recovered ocean plastics.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://SHOWERPOT.ORG](https://showerpot.org)

NuvoH2O Pro 7000 Saltless Water Softener System

Hard water can damage pipes, shorten the life of a water heater, and leave spots on everything. It also literally leaves a bad taste in your mouth. The *Pro 7000* prevents new buildup and breaks down existing scale without using salt or harsh chemicals. Instead, the company uses its citrus-based *CitraCharge* formula to reduce sediment, chlorine and iron, while leaving beneficial minerals intact and restoring clean flavor.

It starts with multi-stage filtration. Then, a built-in UV filter adds another layer of protection by targeting bacteria and viruses, resulting in cleaner, safer and better-tasting water from every tap. The system includes a *Moen Smart Water Valve* for leak detection, real-time alerts and flow tracking data sent straight to a homeowner's phone.

Also, *Pro 7000* doesn't use electricity or wastewater, and results in less plastic waste because households are not relying on bottled water.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://NUVOH2O.COM/](https://nuvoh2o.com/)



Duravit Collection One Two-Piece Toilet

Duravit's *Collection One Two-Piece Toilet* underscores the brand's commitment to local, carbon-neutral production. The company's production facility fires sanitary ceramics using electric roller kilns powered by hydroelectric power, with 99.6 percent of energy sourced from renewables.

Meanwhile, the toilet's timeless design, combined with the brand's innovative creation, improves the quality and longevity of the ceramics, conserving resources, saving energy and emissions, actively contributing to sustainability. It is crafted with the brand's ceramic protective glaze, *DuraShield*, which creates a nearly pore-free surface for easy cleaning and features positively charged metal ions that eliminate 99.9 percent of bacteria within 24 hours.

Additionally, the *Two-Piece Toilet* features Duravit's *Rimless* flushing technology, which rinses the inside of the bowl using less water per flush. The open design of the toilet rim enables an efficient and powerful flush, even with small water volumes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://WWW.DURAVIT.US](https://www.duravit.us)

Cooling and Heating



A.O. Smith Voltex MAX Smart Hybrid Electric Heat Pump Water Heater

This ENERGY STAR certified water heater uses innovative smart valve technology with *Hot Water+* for up to 40 percent more hot water than a standard heat pump. The Voltex MAX, part of A.O. Smith's ProLine XE Voltex Hybrid Electric Heat Pump Water Heater line, also offers smart sensor leak detection and automatic water shutoff.

Voltex MAX, available in 40-, 50-, 66- and 80-gallon capacities, uses heat from the surrounding air to heat water, saving up to \$600 per year on operating costs compared to standard electric water heaters of similar capacity. Vacation mode and guest mode also save money by adjusting to hot water demand in the home.

The Voltex MAX has advanced tank protection, including a stainless steel CoreGard anode rod, Blue Diamond glass lining, and DynaClean automatic sediment-cleaning—designed to protect the tank from the corrosive effects of water and extend the life of the water heater.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.HOTWATER.COM

Lochinvar Centrus Air to Water Hydronic Heat Pump

This compact, all-in-one product moves heat rather than creating it through combustion. The unit utilizes advanced hydronic technology to provide space heating, cooling and domestic hot water capability from a single high-efficiency platform.

Historically, airsource heat pumps struggle in cold climates, losing capacity as temperatures drop. Homeowners are forced to purchase larger units just to keep their homes and water warm. Centrus solves this problem using ComfortLoch technology, a combination of advanced control logic, a dual-pipe heat exchanger and two expansion valves. This dual-loop refrigerant system optimizes efficiency and maintains a high heating capacity at ambient temperatures as low as minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit.

By utilizing a reversible refrigerant loop, the system provides high-performance cooling—eliminating the need for an additional air conditioning unit. Its design further minimizes waste through smart automation, an intuitive remote control that allows the unit to automatically switch between heating and cooling as temperatures shift. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.LOCHNIVAR.COM





Cooling and Heating



Rinnai REHP Series Electric Heat Pump Water Heater

This Rinnai offering blends efficiency, performance, and installation flexibility. It meets the highest efficiency standards with a 4.0 Uniform Energy Factor (UEF), cutting energy use by up to 60 percent versus standard electric models. Using ambient air to heat water, it ensures zero emissions while delivering up to 91 gallons in the first hour. Available in 50-, 65-, and 80-gallon models, the REHP is one of the most sustainable water heating solutions available, reducing energy usage and operating costs.

REHP is duct-ready for indoor use, requires zero clearance for tight spaces, and includes integrated side handles for easier placement. An industry-leading variable-speed fan ensures whisper-quiet operation, while a CTA-2045 EcoPort readies the unit for utility demand-response programs.

Occupants benefit from multiple operating modes and sustainable performance, while professionals appreciate the overall simpler setup. These features save time, space, and energy costs across the product's lifecycle.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://WWW.RINNAI.US](https://www.rinnai.us)

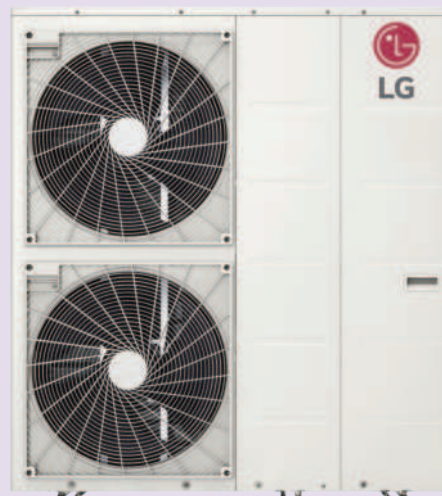
LG Air-to-Water Heat Pump R32 Monobloc

LG's Air-to-Water Heat Pump R32 Monobloc provides efficient heating, cooling and hot water supply, offering homeowners a compact solution that can replace traditional gas systems, reduce carbon emissions and provide energy saving opportunities.

Hydronic components, such as the plate heat exchanger, expansion tank, water pump, flow sensor, pressure sensor, air vent valve and safety valve, are situated inside the unit. Its unique design incorporates all refrigeration components and most electrical controls, streamlining installation and maintenance by minimizing additional refrigerant work.

The R-32 has a compressor that ramps up and down depending on the system load required, rather than turning on or off. It achieves up to four times greater energy efficiency than conventional systems. A mixing valve kit allows precise temperature regulation in two zones for consistent temperatures and enhanced comfort. Users can also link the heat pump and other LG home appliances to the ThinQ app, providing seamless integration and centralized control.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://LGHVAC.COM](https://lg hvac.com)



Gradient All-Weather 120V Window Heat Pump

This product provides a low-cost solution to replacing inefficient electric resistance heating in older multifamily buildings. It's a cold-climate window heat pump that delivers professional-grade heating and cooling from a single, all-electric unit—with none of the barriers that have stalled building decarbonization at scale.

The All-Weather 120V eliminates the single biggest barrier to building electrification: cost and complexity. It plugs into a standard 120-volt household outlet, which means no electrical panel upgrades, no ductwork, and no specialized contractors. Two people can install a unit in under 30 minutes.

Unlike window air conditioners, the All-Weather 120V provides year-round heating and cooling from a single unit, operating in temperatures down to minus 13 degrees Fahrenheit. It meets CEE Advanced Tier and ENERGY STAR certification standards, and has been recognized on the Consortium for Energy Efficiency's Qualified Product List—opening the door to significant utility rebates and up to \$2,000 in IRA tax credits for homeowners (but so far, only through 2026).

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.GRADIENTCOMFORT.COM](http://www.gradientcomfort.com)



Carrier Performance Series Next Gen Air Handler

Carrier's Performance Series Next Gen Air Handler reduces energy consumption through advanced engineering that contributes to a more sustainable-built environment.

The system's 25-speed operation allows the air handler to precisely match airflow and capacity to real time demands. By running only at the level required to maintain consistent indoor temperatures, the air handler minimizes peak loads and cumulative energy use throughout the year.

Mixed flow fan technology moves air radially and axially, improving overall system efficiency and enabling more uniform airflow throughout the home. Enhanced airflow reduces hot and cold spots, decreases run times and allows the system to maintain a comfortable environment using less energy.

The VERTEX coil supports sustainability by improving heat transfer while decreasing pressure drop. Lower pressure drop means the blower does not have to work as hard to move air, resulting in reduced electrical consumption. Additionally, improved heat transfer helps the system reach desired temperatures faster and more efficiently.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.CARRIER.COM

Midea EVOX G³ Air Handler Unit

The EVOX G³ Air Handler Unit (AHU) is a versatile and flexible heating solution fitted to the diverse needs of North American homes. Engineered with dual-fuel capability, the EVOX G³ system allows homeowners to partially upgrade their existing heating systems by integrating seamlessly with existing gas furnaces as a backup.

Additionally, the optional electric heat kit can be combined with the heat pump for rapid heating in extremely cold conditions. The EVOX G³ AHU is also compatible with existing 120-volt and 240-volt systems, enhancing its adaptability for upgrades and replacements.

EVOX G³ is capable of being separated into three manageable pieces thanks to a "Block N Lock" design, optimizes installations, especially when maneuvering into challenging spaces like attics, basements or crawlspaces. Its multi-position installation configuration means contractors can stock one SKU and install it in six configurations. The product's footprint is 30 percent smaller than current ENERGY STAR units, which makes electrification easier.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.MIDEACOMFORT.US



Stiebel Eltron Tempra Whole House Electric Tankless Water Heater

Keeping hot water hot can be a pain. The Tempra Whole House Electric Tankless Water Heater's Advanced Flow Control feature helps offset that problem. If hot water demand is greater than the water heater can handle, Advanced Flow Control automatically reduces the flow just enough to help maintain the desired water temperature.

Every Tempra unit also has self-modulation, which ensures that only the least amount of energy is used at all times. Compared to a conventional electric tank water heater, a tankless electric water heater will typically use 15 to 20 percent less energy.

Because of the Tempra's small size, the unit can be installed close to hot water taps, which makes the wait for hot water as short as possible. It uses vastly less raw material to manufacture compared to a tank. Disposal of a tankless has a much lower environmental impact, and all major components are recyclable. FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://STIEBEL-ELTRON-USA.COM](https://STIEBEL-ELTRON-USA.COM)



Decking, Roofing and Siding

LP SmartSide Trim & Siding

LP SmartSide Trim & Siding is engineered for long-lasting performance and built with sustainability at its core. LP SmartSide products store carbon originally captured by trees; they continue to retain that carbon throughout their useful lives, helping reduce overall greenhouse gas levels. This benefit is part of LP's holistic approach to sustainability, which emphasizes responsible material use, product longevity, and transparent environmental reporting.

LP develops life cycle assessments (LCAs) and Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs). LCAs and EPDs allow LP to evaluate the environmental footprint of each product from raw material sourcing through manufacturing, installation, use, and end-of-life.

In 2023, LP completed an updated LCA and EPD for LP SmartSide Lap, Panel, and Trim products in North America. The results showed that LP SmartSide is carbon negative, meaning it stores more carbon than it emits, and that it produces significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions than many alternative siding materials.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://LPCORP.COM](https://lpcorp.com)



ProVia Metal Roofing

ProVia metal shake, slate, and barrel tile roofing meets emphasize design and sustainable manufacturing. These roofing systems are made from domestically sourced, high-quality recycled steel and are 100 percent recyclable at the end of their life cycle. As a result, they offer homeowners a roofing solution that supports environmental stewardship without compromising performance or aesthetics.

Designed to last for decades, these systems provide homeowners with long-term protection and are backed by a 50-year lifetime limited warranty. Their durability significantly reduces the need for replacement, preventing the repeated deconstruction and disposal of roofing materials that can burden landfills over time. Metal roofs can also improve a home's energy efficiency by reflecting intense UV rays, helping regulate indoor temperatures.

ProVia metal panels are also built to withstand extreme conditions. They resist cracking and impact damage, feature galvanized surfaces for added weather protection, and use secure installation systems designed to hold firm even in hurricane-strength winds. FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.PROVIA.COM](http://www.provia.com)

Fiberon Novus Fused Composite Decking

Fiberon's Novus fused decking pairs a groundbreaking photorealistic wood appearance with a new-to-the-industry thermoset shell that prevents scratches and dents, culminating in an innovative approach to composite decking. The shell protects Novus boards against fading, weather and wear.

Designed after cedar and the Brazilian hardwood ipe trees, exotic woods that traditionally come with hefty price tags, Novus brings luxury aesthetics with a sustainable advantage. Like Fiberon's other composite collections, Novus is built with recycled plastics and reclaimed wood, helping to reduce deforestation.

Novus is not layered or laminated. It is also Fiberon's most slip-resistant board ever, offering year-round confidence in every step. A precise image-capture technology preserves the genuine appearance of real wood, and that look is backed by a 50-year warranty. It continues Fiberon's tradition of manufacturing high-quality composite decking and railing products designed to make outdoor living easy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.FIBERONDECKING.COM](http://www.fiberondecking.com)





James Hardie Trim-Over

The *Trim-Over* installation method represents an advancement in sustainable building practices, offering a holistic solution that addresses material efficiency, installation productivity, and long-term durability. This innovative installation technique is transforming how siding and trim are applied—delivering measurable benefits for contractors, homeowners, and the environment.

Unlike traditional approaches, where trim is installed before siding and extensive caulking is required to seal cut edges, *Trim-Over* reverses the sequence: siding is installed first, followed by trim that covers the cut edges. This simple yet powerful shift reduces the use of caulking—a costly material that must be replaced over time.

The method also leverages a score-and-snap technique, which reduces the number of precise measurements and saw cuts required. Installers can stage and install siding continuously, resulting in less offcut waste and fewer errors that would otherwise lead to discarded material. Faster installation means less time onsite, which means reduced energy consumption from tools, vehicles, and jobsite operations. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.JAMESHARDIE.COM

Trex Refuge PVC Decking

Wildfires are an increasing threat with every approaching summer, but Trex has an effective answer. The company's *Refuge* PVC decking resists fire ignition and meets the International Code Council (ICC)'s International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) standard and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) compliance. That's very good news for more than 60,000 U.S. communities now facing fire danger year-round.

Refuge PVC is Trex's first move into cellular PVC decking. The product meets ASTM E84 Class A Flame Spread standards far better than traditional wood. But *Refuge*'s 1-inch-thick square edge board installs just like wood, via deck screws. It also looks like the real thing, without wood's traditional enemies: fading, staining, scratching, rotting, warping and splintering.

The decking features a refined, wire-brushed grain pattern and is available in two hues, each crafted to capture the natural beauty of their namesake landscape. The product is only available in select regions. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.TREX.COM/



Westwood Millwork *Therma* Product Line

Therma is Westwood Millwork's signature line of thermally modified siding, decking and planking crafted from carefully selected domestic species for stability and natural beauty. Each board is designed to perform well in outdoor environments where moisture, sun and seasonal movement can challenge lesser materials.

The three-phase thermal modification process removes moisture and organic compounds, making the wood more stable, resistant to rot and insects, and giving it a rich, darker hue throughout. The result is a beautiful, high-performance material that withstands outdoor conditions with minimal maintenance and a longer lifespan. The chemical-free thermal modification uses only heat and steam to transform wood at the cellular level.

Therma is durable and decay-resistant, backed by a 25-year manufacturer's warranty. It resists cupping, twisting, and warping. Wood types include Ash, Poplar, Southern Yellow Pine, and CVG Hemlock. FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://WESTWOODMILLWORKS.COM](https://WESTWOODMILLWORKS.COM)





Decking, Roofing and Siding

CertainTeed *RISE Siding and Trim*

CertainTeed's *RISE Siding and Trim*, a forward-looking alternative to cement and wood-based products, feature quality synthetic fibers such as polyester, nylon and fiberglass—from post-consumer and post-industrial recycle and waste streams—resulting in affordable, durable, and long-lasting siding and trim options.

The siding and trim products are created with 94 percent recycled materials. Manufacturing doesn't consume new raw materials, which reduces negative environmental impact. Traditional hard cladding and trim materials are often manufactured in ways that can generate water and air pollution; using reclaimed fibers keeps existing materials out of landfills.

RISE also mimics the simplicity and flexibility of natural wood without the associated cost and maintenance. The siding and trim can be cut just like traditional wood without the need for special tools. And, aesthetically pleasing, *RISE* products offer high performance in all climates.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.CERTAINTEED.COM

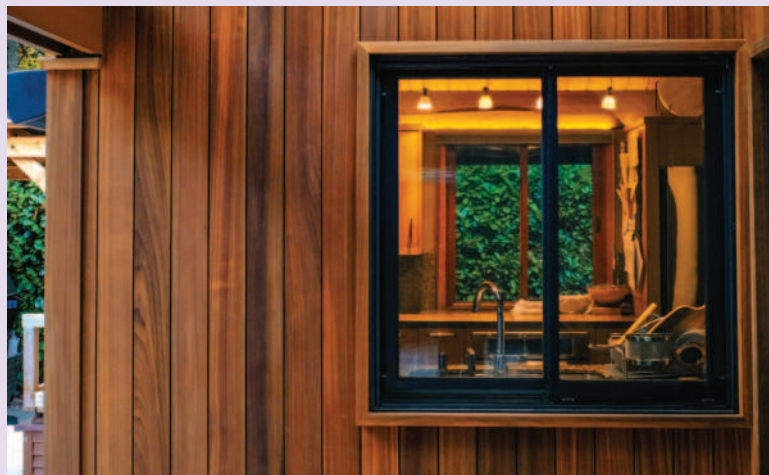


Amble Wood Co. *Cascade Collection*

The *Cascade Collection* combines custom milling and finishing using premium, sustainably sourced or FSC-certified, traditional or modified wood products (*Accoya* and *ThermoWood*). There's also the GRAD System, which uses an aluminum rail with a hidden clip for wood decking, siding and other applications. It is made from 80 percent recycled aluminum and is lightweight, corrosion resistant, and non-flammable.

The plastic clips keep their natural elasticity over time. Because the premium wood boards sit on clips, there's no contact with aluminum joists, reducing water trips and helping prevent cupping for longer-lasting performance. Plus, the GRAD materials are resistant to corrosion, fire, insects and rot, and can be used in a wide range of temperature climates.

The *Cascade Collection* system offers architectural flexibility, clean lines, dependable performance, sustainable materials, and easy installation, delivering efficient, durable and aesthetically consistent results for exterior and interior applications. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.AMBLEWOODCO.COM



Nichiha USA *VintageWood Blackwood Architectural Wall Panels*

Crafted from durable fiber cement, *Blackwood* captures the refined grain and tonal character of natural wood without relying on harvested lumber or the intensive maintenance associated with traditional wood products. By replacing organic materials prone to decay, repainting, and early replacement, *VintageWood Blackwood* supports material efficiency, long-term durability, and reduced lifecycle impacts across residential and commercial projects.

VintageWood Blackwood panels are composed of cement, fly ash, silica, recycled materials and wood fibers, balancing performance with responsible material selection. Their resistance to fire, moisture, pests, warping, and rot extends façade service life and minimizes the need for repair or replacement, reducing material consumption and waste over time.

The product contributes to high-performing, resilient building envelopes by promoting air circulation and effective moisture management behind the façade. This system-level approach enhances wall assembly longevity, supports healthier buildings in high-humidity and variable climates, and reduces the risk of moisture-related failures.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.NICHIHA.COM



Energy Products and Storage

Renon Power *Xcellent Plus* Energy Storage System

The Renon Power *Xcellent Plus* is a next-generation 16kWh residential energy storage system designed to accelerate the transition to resilient, electrified, and sustainable homes. Built on safe, long-life lithium iron phosphate (LFP) chemistry, and scalable up to 496kWh in parallel, *Xcellent Plus* delivers reliable whole-home backup power, daily energy optimization, and seamless integration with solar PV.

Engineered for modern high-load households, *Xcellent Plus* supports scalable system configurations to meet a range of residential energy needs, from essential backup to full-home electrification. Its high usable capacity, advanced battery management system (BMS), and compatibility with leading hybrid inverters enable homeowners to maximize self-consumption of renewable energy, and participate in emerging programs such as demand response and virtual power plants (VPPs).

The system's LFP chemistry eliminates cobalt and nickel, improving material ethics and thermal stability while extending cycle life well beyond traditional lithium-ion solutions. The product's long and high round-trip efficiency reduces lifecycle emissions and total cost of ownership. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** WWW.RENONPOWER.COM



SPAN Panel *MAIN 16*

This is a smart electrical panel made for the modern multifamily home. A smaller-sized panel means homeowners in multifamily properties can electrify without shouldering the cost and responsibility of energy upgrades for their whole building. For builders, *MAIN 16* introduces a flexible new pathway for integrating intelligent energy management into smaller new-construction homes, build to rent (BTR) communities, multifamily units, retrofit projects, and compact living spaces such as ADUs.

Every SPAN Panel provides circuit-level insight and control, maximizing energy efficiency and helping residents reduce their energy costs. Each model also includes patent-pending *SPAN PowerUp* energy management system (EMS) software, enabling the addition of high-demand appliances—like EV chargers, heat pumps, induction cooking, or even hot tubs.

When paired with solar and home battery storage, SPAN Panels let homeowners set custom backup priorities and can extend battery life by up to 40 percent during outages. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** WWW.SPAN.IO

Jinko Eagle *ACB-261* Modular Storage System

The *Eagle ACB-261* is an all-in-one solution with best-in-class safety features, reliability, and performance from one of the industry's most bankable brands. There are multiple safety sensors, active battery temperature management, and a fire suppression system that ensures safe and reliable performance.

The product's modular design includes a streamlined design, transportation, installation, and operations and maintenance. Up to 12 units can be stacked in parallel with no additional equipment necessary. The configuration also enables flexible system designs of up to 1.5MW/3MWh.

In addition, dynamic liquid cooling maintains homogeneous temperature across battery cells for high cycle life. Multiple temperature management modes reduce power consumption, increasing system efficiency. A hybrid system mode enables users to store excess daytime PV power for use at night for full self sufficiency. And, a remote control mode enables full compatibility with utility virtual power plant (VPP) programs, adding further value to the system user. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** WWW.JINKO.US





Fire Safety



LP BurnGuard Fire-Retardant-Treated OSB

LP BurnGuard Fire-Retardant-Treated (FRT) Oriented Strand Board (OSB) combines high-performance fire protection with meaningful environmental benefits—an increasingly rare balance in the building materials space. As a wood-based product, BurnGuard naturally stores carbon captured by trees, keeping that carbon locked away throughout its lifespan and helping reduce overall greenhouse gas levels. This inherent carbon-retention advantage positions it ahead of many traditional fire-resistant materials that rely on energy-intensive mineral or chemical components.

At the same time, BurnGuard delivers robust fire performance without sacrificing strength or durability, allowing builders to enhance resilience without compromising sustainability. Its ease of installation and compatibility with standard framing practices can also reduce labor time, waste, and transportation impacts, supporting greener construction workflows.

LP's broader commitment to transparency further strengthens BurnGuard's case; the company consistently publishes third-party-verified LCAs and EPDs across its product lines, offering credible, data-driven insight into environmental performance. FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://LPCORP.COM](https://lpcorp.com)

Arclin Firepoint 10-foot OSB

Firepoint 10-foot Oriented Strand Board (OSB) by Arclin is a purpose-built structural sheathing panel designed to rebuild and build smarter in wildfire-prone regions without adding complexity, cost or carbon. Firepoint delivers up to 90 minutes of burn-through protection on wall assemblies—roughly 53 percent beyond code requirements—providing precious extra time when every second counts.

Unlike traditional fire-treated wood products that rely on chemical infusion—often affecting strength, corrosion potential, or long-term durability—Firepoint preserves the inherent structural performance of OSB. Fire resistance is integrated without sacrificing strength, stiffness, or constructability, allowing builders to meet elevated fire-safety expectations without introducing new tradeoffs.

Firepoint advances sustainability by doing more with less. Longer panels reduce cutoffs and material waste, improving yield per sheet and lowering landfill impact. Fewer seams mean fewer fasteners, less detailing, and reduced labor hours, all of which mean lower embodied carbon across the assembly.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://FIREPOINT.ARCLIN.COM](https://firepoint.arclin.com)



Floors, Surfaces and Walls



Florim USA - MILEstone - The Playful Collection

The *Playful Collection* redefines the relationship between bold, artistic expression and environmental stewardship. As a certified carbon-neutral wall collection, *Playful* provides architects and designers with the freedom to create without compromising their commitment to the planet. By combining a handmade aesthetic with state-of-the-art sustainable manufacturing, *Playful* proves that high-energy, colorful design can be 100 percent eco-responsible.

Playful is a carbon-neutral collection, meaning its entire carbon footprint has been measured and offset. This allows for bold, light-reflective designs that contribute to net-zero building targets. The tile body is crafted using 100 percent regionally sourced raw materials. This drastically reduces Scope 3 transport emissions and supports the local circular economy.

The collection mimics the charm of handmade tile, being specifically engineered to reflect and diffuse natural light. This can contribute to brighter interiors and potentially reduce the need for artificial lighting in well-designed spaces. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.MILESTONETILES.COM

Construction Specialties Acrovyn with Post-Consumer Recycled Content

Acrovyn with Post-Consumer Recycled Content is the newest evolution of Construction Specialties (CS)'s *Acrovyn Wall Protection*. *Acrovyn* quickly became known for its durability, cleanability and impact resistance. To reduce the embodied carbon of *Acrovyn*, CS switched the resin to utilize up to 50 percent post-consumer recycled content.

Using recycled PET helps avoid the emissions tied to virgin plastic production. One *Acrovyn* sheet now reuses 130 plastic bottles that would otherwise contribute to waste or emissions. *Acrovyn* is 100 percent recyclable, meaning it can be reused at end of life and reduce carbon emissions associated with raw material extraction in other product supply chains.

In addition to post-consumer recycled content, CS' PVC-free *Acrovyn* sheet products have Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), Health Product Declarations (HPDs), Cradle to Cradle (C2C) certification, and Intertek Clean Air Gold certification to help contribute to green building goals. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.C-SGROUP.COM



Submaterial Cork / Planar

Cork / Planar is a modular, tile-based wall system that pairs the natural warmth of sustainably produced cork with integrated acoustic performance. Designed to bring texture, depth and quiet to interior spaces, the collection is available in multiple sizes and tones, allowing designers to create flexible, rhythmic compositions that feel intentional and organic.

Each tile is backed with an acoustic substrate made from recycled PET containing 60 percent post-consumer content. This backing is effectively twice recycled: It incorporates post-consumer material and is produced using offcuts reclaimed from a larger product line. This extends material life and significantly reduces waste. The result is a sound-dampening surface that transforms discarded materials into a functional, high-performing design element.

Submaterial's use of naturally renewable cork and low-VOC materials supports healthier indoor air quality while reinforcing the collection's commitment to responsible material sourcing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://SUBMATERIAL.COM](https://SUBMATERIAL.COM)





Floors, Surfaces and Walls

(Continued)



Mohawk Flooring *RevWood*

RevWood provides waterproof performance, pet stain and scratch protection and fade resistance, delivering quality made to last. Mohawk Flooring's *WetProtect* technology includes watertight joints, a proprietary waterproof finish and a lifetime surface and subfloor warranty.

Recycled natural resources are used to produce a heavy-duty, high-density core board that is not reliant on the harvesting of old-growth hardwoods. *RevWood* is comprised of more than 70 percent pre-consumer recycled wood by-products, such as sawdust from mills and chips from log processing.

Trees naturally remove carbon from the atmosphere during their growth cycle, and when combined with efficient production operations, Mohawk was able to create a floor that is carbon negative from cradle to gate. This means that from the time it was planted through manufacturing and packaging, *RevWood* removes more greenhouse gases than it creates. FOR

MORE INFORMATION: WWW.MOHAWKFLOORING.COM

DalTile *Haddonstone Tile Collection*

Haddonstone continues DalTile's priority of using recycled materials in its products. The company recovers and reuses 98 percent of process wastewater used at its manufacturing plants, an effort that conserves more than 200 million gallons of water per year.

The tiles are made from water, clay, sand, feldspar, and other natural minerals. The tiles contain zero VOCs, PVCs, allergens, and formaldehyde. *Haddonstone* is also waterproof, stain proof, dent proof, scratch resistant, fire resistant and freeze/thaw resistant.

DalTile's *Haddonstone* collection is designed to offer tranquil visuals of English portland limestone in a porcelain tile format. The collection balances the aesthetics of an organic natural stone design with a variety of sizes, finishes and value-added features. The product includes DalTile's proprietary *StepWise* technology, which offers 50 percent greater slip resistance. It can be used indoors, outdoors or flowing in between the two—making possible the continuous design that is very popular in today's residential spaces. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.DALTILE.COM



HydroBlok *HB One Backer CI*

HydroBlok *HB One Backer CI* is a high-performance cement board alternative designed to eliminate inefficiencies, reduce labor, and deliver superior moisture and thermal performance. *HB One Backer CI* delivers a 4-in-1 system in a single high-performance board: Secondary Water-Resistive Barrier (WRB), continuous insulation, integrated lath, and scratch coat.

The product can be installed in three steps—compared to four for cement boards—and this results in 20 to 35 percent savings in labor costs, and installation times that are almost twice as fast. Fewer steps also mean fewer mistakes and tighter schedules.

Unlike cement board, which can allow moisture intrusion if not perfectly detailed, HydroBlok is 100 percent mold proof and 100 percent waterproof. This provides builders and homeowners with long-term protection against rot, mold growth, and costly callbacks. *HB One Backer CI* delivers R-5 per inch, providing true continuous insulation that improves energy efficiency, helps meet modern building codes, and reduces thermal bridging.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://HYDROBLOK.COM](https://HYDROBLOK.COM)

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)



Panasonic Intelli-Balance(R) Elite Plus Series

Whether for multi-family projects or energy-efficient new builds, *Intelli-Balance Elite Plus+* delivers dependable, balanced ventilation that meets today's toughest performance and air quality standards. The system is engineered to provide consistent airflow and year-round reliability in a wide range of climates and building types.

With up to 90 percent Sensible Recovery Efficiency (SRE) and Total Recovery Efficiency (TRE) as high as 84 percent, *Intelli-Balance* ERVs manage humidity effectively and maintain the designed airflow, even under high static pressure or in extreme temperatures down to minus 22 degrees Fahrenheit. This ensures better comfort, lower energy costs, and improved indoor air quality, all while supporting compliance with ASHRAE 62.2 ventilation requirements.

By capturing energy before it escapes the home, the ERV lowers operational energy demand and reduces carbon emissions associated with heating and cooling. Reducing humidity by up to 40 percent enables the use of smaller HVAC systems, helping to decrease material use and lifetime energy consumption.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://IAQ.NA.PANASONIC.COM](https://iaq.na.panasonic.com)

Honeywell Home Whole Home Dehumidifier

The Honeywell Home *Whole Home Dehumidifier* provides versatile, serviceable, and efficient indoor air quality (IAQ) solutions. Smart sensors—monitoring inlet/outlet temperatures, relative humidity, and pressure differentials—also help extend system life. The goal is to repair instead of replace, with service-friendly design and components built for long-term maintenance.

Designed for residential use, it integrates easily into HVAC ductwork and serves as a dehumidifier and a ventilation controller. It features onboard temperature, humidity, and differential pressure sensors that help the unit adjust its operation to avoid conditions like coil freezing or poor airflow that could strain the system. An integrated leak detection rope automatically shuts down the unit if standing water is detected.

It blends two traditionally separate systems—dehumidification and ventilation—into one device with intelligent control logic. It provides serviceability with a magnet mounted onboard display controller, side-access panel, common filter sizes, and replaceable parts for field repair. FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.HONEYWELLHOME.COM](http://www.honeywellhome.com)



3M Filtrete Refillable Air Filter

Filtrete, the No. 1 trusted brand in residential HVAC air filters, launched the new *Filtrete Refillable Air Filter Kit*. This innovative kit addresses common consumer pain points by offering a reusable frame that lasts up to 20 years, and a collapsible filter that lasts up to 12 months. The refills are more affordable (based on MSRP), reduce storage space by 75 percent, and cut disposable waste by 20 percent (by weight), compared to traditional Filtrete air filters.

This product helps consumers achieve cleaner air with a reusable and budget conscious choice. The kit includes *Filtrete MPR 1550 (MERV 12) Refillable Air Filters*, which capture 42 percent more microparticles (0.3-1 microns) than the industry standard. This effectively removes more allergens, bacteria and viruses, for cleaner indoor air.

This filtration also helps maintain strong airflow, allowing HVAC systems to run efficiently and use less energy when filters are changed regularly.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.FILTRETE.COM](http://www.filtrete.com)



Insulation

BASF WALLTITE RSB Spray Polyurethane Foam

WALLTITE RSB is a next-generation closed-cell spray polyurethane foam (SPF) insulation system engineered to help project teams lower the environmental impact of buildings without trading performance or jobsite reliability. "RSB" reflects the product's design intent: Recycled, Sustainable, and (partly) Biobased—measurable content attributes supported by third-party verification, and transparent documentation.

WALLTITE RSB's formulation includes biobased and recycled content, and those attributes are supported by independent, third-party programs rather than internal estimates. The product is Certified Biobased through the USDA BioPreferred Program and UL Solutions verified for recycled and biobased content, giving builders, architects, and specifiers documentation they can rely on for sustainable material reporting and project submittals.

The BASF product is supported by an independently verified Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) that quantifies environmental impacts and helps project teams compare materials using a consistent life-cycle methodology.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.SPF.BASF.COM



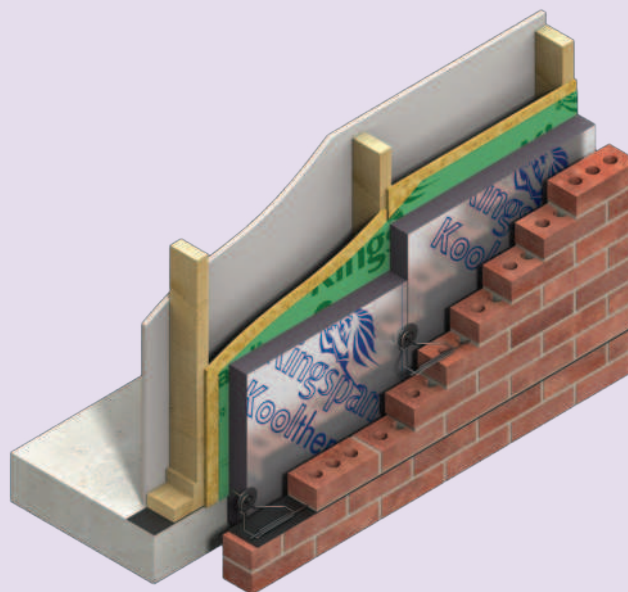
Kingspan Kooltherm K100 Series Insulation

Kingspan's flagship phenolic insulation, the *Kooltherm K100 Series*, sets a benchmark for sustainable, high-performance residential construction. With an industry-leading R-value of 8.1 to 9.2 per inch—the thinnest profile in its class—the series significantly reduces the total volume of material required for construction. This substantially lowers the embodied carbon footprint compared to traditional, thicker insulation.

Sustainability is embedded throughout the product lifecycle. The *K100 Series'* slim, lightweight boards require fewer raw materials and less energy to manufacture than thicker, lower-performing alternatives. Their compact form also allows substantially more insulation to be transported per shipment, reducing transportation-related carbon emissions. This efficiency also enables the construction of thinner residential walls and more compact building envelopes, reducing a home's overall environmental footprint.

Beyond energy savings, the *K100* offers advanced fire and moisture resistance and utilizes a blowing agent with zero Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP) and low Global Warming Potential (GWP).

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.KINGSPAN.COM





OX-IS Structural Insulated Sheathing

This building code-endorsed product is really 4 in 1: strong, highly durable sheathing, robust continuous insulation, a virtually impenetrable water barrier, and a superior air and vapor barrier. The product features the industry's tightest air barrier for lower air infiltration: an air exchange per hour performance 15 to 20 percent better than standard *OSB + House Wrap*.

OX-IS insulated sheathing starts with a non-reflective and resilient exterior facer that provides water resistance and high durability. The closed-cell, moisture-resistant polyisocyanurate foam core provides high compressive strength, a long-term R-value and a continuous air barrier. And a thin, high-pressure laminated member provides even more structural support.

A composite of a polymer-coated cellulosic fiber substrate, a high R-value polyiso foam insulation, and a non-reflective facer, when *OX-IS* panels are installed with *OX SeamTape* or *OX Butyl Flashing Tape*, the system provides a lasting best-in-class air barrier. *OX-IS* comes with a 30-year limited warranty.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.OXENGINEEREDPRODUCTS.COM

Nisus Pro-Shield Nsulation

Pro-Shield Nsulation isn't just a sustainably made cellulose insulation—it's a registered pesticide. As a blown-in insulation with 14.72 percent orthoboric acid, it offers an additional line of defense against listed pests while improving energy efficiency and reducing noise. The product is also installed by licensed pest control operators to ensure that it's applied correctly and effectively. *Pro-Shield Nsulation* comes ready to use.

Pro-Shield Nsulation combines the benefits of cellulose insulation (such as thermal regulation, sound dampening, and sustainability) with the power of borates to give pest control operators a new service offering. The insulation is made from recycled cellulose products, using up to 50 percent renewable energy. It contains no asbestos, glass fibers, or formaldehyde.

Insulation provides service professionals with a great way to expand offerings. *Pro-Shield* is easy to install, with minimal training required for PMPs. There is also limited overhead required to add *Pro-Shield* as a service offering.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://NISUSCORP.COM](https://NISUSCORP.COM)





Paint



Benjamin Moore *Eco Spec* Low-Odor Paint

Benjamin Moore has unveiled the second generation of *Eco Spec*—the brand's greenest and lowest odor paint. Blending exceptional performance with eco responsible innovation, *Eco Spec* achieves beautiful results with zero VOCs and zero emissions, even after tinting.

Eco Spec's odor completely dissipates within an hour after application, meaning spaces painted can be reoccupied sooner, providing minimal disruption and a fast return to space. It has superior chemical resistance, withstanding repeat washing from common disinfectants and cleaning agents, and is formulated with antimicrobial additives, preventing the buildup of mold and mildew on dry paint film.

Eco Spec meets—and often exceeds—some of the highest standards for environmental and performance criteria regarding VOCs, emissions, application, washability and scrub ability. It has been tested by multiple independent green certifying organizations, including The Asthma & Allergy Friendly Certification Program, Green Seal, LEED Indoor Air Quality Standards, and Master Painters Institute (MPI) Green Performance. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.BENJAMINMOORE.COM

BEHR PREMIUM PLUS ECOMIX Plant-Based Paint & Primer

BEHR's *PREMIUM PLUS ECOMIX* is an innovative paint and primer that combines positive environmental benefits with high-performance and durability. This plant-based product delivers on all fronts: performance, durability, low emissions, zero VOC, and renewable content.

Unlike competitor products that use naturally derived but less durable alkyd technology, *PREMIUM PLUS ECOMIX* is the first 100 percent all-acrylic paint and primer that meets the 20 percent minimum threshold of renewable materials set for the interior paints and coatings category by the USDA BioPreferred Program. The new paint is also UL GREENGUARD GOLD certified, ensuring it has low chemical emissions and contributes to a healthier indoor environment.

Behr Paint Company's environmental commitment extends beyond the *PREMIUM PLUS ECOMIX* product's formulation. The company focuses on responsible ingredient sourcing, efficient manufacturing, and using low-impact, recycled packaging.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.BEHR.COM



Solar

CertainTeed *Solstice Shingle*

CertainTeed's *Solstice Shingle* is an innovative solar roofing solution that combines the benefits of traditional asphalt shingles with the power of solar energy. This advanced roofing system seamlessly integrates solar technology, providing aesthetic appeal and sustainable energy generation.

The *Solstice Shingle* is designed to mimic the appearance of traditional asphalt shingles, ensuring a visually appealing roofline. It features sleek, low-profile solar panels that are integrated directly into the shingles, creating a uniform look. This unique design eliminates the need for bulky and obtrusive solar panels, preserving the curb appeal for the homeowner.

The solar panels embedded within the shingles are made with advanced photovoltaic technology, allowing them to convert sunlight into electricity with exceptional efficiency. This means that even under low light conditions, such as cloudy days, the *Solstice Shingle* can still generate electricity and contribute to energy needs. The electricity generated by the solar panels also reduces reliance on the grid.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.CERTAINTEED.COM



Sunbolt *Eclipse Solar Charging Umbrella*

The reimagined fabric canopy *Eclipse* is an evolution of a proven product. By replacing the previous panel array with a smaller number of higher-efficiency solar panels, delivering 88 watts of DC solar power, Sunbolt has produced a more streamlined, lightweight canopy without sacrificing performance. The collapsible umbrella fits any table with a standard 1.5-inch umbrella hole and can also be used as a standalone unit with a base.

Meanwhile, the entirely new *Eclipse Solar Charging Umbrella - Aluminum Canopy* offers a durable, non-collapsible option for permanent or semi-permanent installations. Its rigid aluminum canopy houses a 110-watt DC solar array. The stainless steel center post and aluminum hardware are built for long-term outdoor endurance.

Both *Eclipse* models share a common charging infrastructure: six dual-port USB/USB-C fast-charging outlets, two 7Ah Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePO4) batteries, and an MPPT charge controller, delivering reliable, off-grid power for smartphones, tablets, and other handheld devices throughout the day.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.GOSUNBOLT.COM



Solar *(Continued)*



VELUX Solar-Powered Fresh Air Skylight System

The first-of-its-kind *VELUX Solar-Powered Fresh Air Skylight System* combines solar-powered functionality with passive design principles. Each unit includes a pre-installed, room-darkening shade that significantly improves thermal performance, helping retain heat in the winter and block solar gain in the summer. When closed, the double-pleated shade provides up to 46 percent improvement in thermal values and up to 43 percent improvement in solar heat gain, reducing reliance on HVAC systems and cutting energy bills year-round.

A venting skylight also helps cool a home naturally. Opening a window and a skylight pulls the warm air out at the roofline and replaces it with cool, fresh air 15 times faster than windows alone. This also reduces reliance on mechanical cooling.

Venting and shade operation can be managed via remote control or app, giving homeowners full control over the light entering their space. The natural light creates more open, brighter spaces where homeowners don't need as much electrical lighting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.VELUXUSA.COM

SolarEdge Nexis Solution

This revolutionary solar-plus-storage platform empowers homeowners to take complete control over their energy future. Combining cutting-edge inverter technology, high-capacity battery storage, smart energy management, and a sleek, modular design, *Nexis* represents the next generation of residential clean energy systems.

Nexis was designed to make solar and storage simpler, smarter, and more accessible. The system's high 92 percent efficiency ensures that more solar energy is converted into usable electricity, reducing overall energy loss. Its modular, right-sized design prevents overproduction and waste, while its long operational lifespan and repairable architecture prevent unnecessary system turnover.

Its ultra-compact, stackable format takes up to 40 percent less wall space than other leading systems. The clean, modular design allows it to be installed on the wall or floor, indoors or outdoors, providing maximum installation flexibility without cluttering the home environment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.SOLAREEDGE.COM



Windows



Kolbe Windows & Doors *LuxWall Enthermal Transparent Insulation*

Kolbe Windows & Doors now offers vacuum-insulated glazing technology with options from *LuxWall: Enthermal Transparent Insulation* and *Enthermal Plus Transparent Insulation*. *Enthermal* represents the essential technology with a vacuum contained between two panes of tempered glass. *Enthermal Plus* adds a third pane of glass for modified performance and customizable options. Both glass door options push energy efficiency and occupant comfort forward without sacrificing aesthetic vision.

By using a vacuum instead of air, argon or krypton within the glass for insulation, Kolbe products with *Enthermal* outperform standard dual-pane units. For example, a Kolbe *VistaLuxe WD LINE* direct set with standard dual-pane glass has a U-value of 0.23. Integrating *Enthermal* into the same unit results in a U-value as low as 0.14.

Simultaneously, the comparatively narrow depth of the *Transparent Insulation* allows *Enthermals* to be utilized in new construction, renovation and restoration settings where triple-pane glass and other high-performance glass options otherwise may not be feasible. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.KOLBEWINDOWS.COM

Awake Window & Door Co. *Triple Pane System*

This system delivers high-performance sustainability without sacrificing the ultra-clean lines designers expect. Engineered to expand glass thickness capacity within Awake's existing thermally broken frames, the system achieves engineering-estimated U-values as low as 0.14–0.19, delivering exceptional thermal performance and reduced operational carbon.

Available across a full ecosystem of window walls, casements, awnings, multi-slide, hinged, and pivot doors, it enables a consistent, minimalist aesthetic on projects that demand rigorous energy codes and comfort standards. Narrow sightlines, advanced insulated glass technology, and excellent noise reduction help create quieter, more efficient, and more resilient homes in demanding climates.

By pairing architectural minimalism with measurable envelope performance, Awake's Triple Pane system exemplifies the next generation sustainable fenestration. FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://AWAKEWDC.COM](https://AWAKEWDC.COM)





Other Innovations



EAB Tool Company Inc. *Green Blade*

The EAB Exchange-A-Blade *Green Blade* assortment demonstrates sustainable innovation. Designed for professionals and DIYers alike, these blades are engineered for precision and durability. Advanced engineering ensures blades last longer, reducing the frequency of replacements.

Blades are made from high-quality metals that can be reclaimed and reused. The carbide tips are made from recycled carbide. EAB uses minimal, recyclable packaging materials to lower its carbon footprint.

At the heart of EAB's sustainability mission is its "Buy-Use-Exchange & Save" program, a circular model that encourages responsible consumption. Customers select from more than 900 high-performance, exchangeable power tool accessories, including the Green Blade assortment. Blades are used until dull, delivering consistent performance across a variety of materials. Then, instead of discarding used blades, customers return them to participating retailers and receive up to 48 percent credit toward a new product.

This system reduces landfill waste and also incentivizes sustainable behavior through tangible savings. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.EXCHANGEABLADE.COM

AccuFrame Energy Cap

AccuFrame Energy Cap is a patented framing and air sealing system that solves two of the biggest challenges in construction: rising energy codes and labor costs. The product is a gasketed template that attaches to the top and bottom plates. It marks stud positions for fast, error-free framing—and becomes a durable, built-in air seal once the sheathing is installed. One install. Four-way seal. No caulk. No crew delays.

Projects that the *AccuFrame Energy Cap* is used on see up to an 81 percent reduction in air leakage in common stick walls. Compared to traditional caulking-only methods, *AccuFrame Energy Cap* cuts air intrusion by as much as 30 percent. The gaskets also make the wall up to 66 percent stronger—like rubber on glass.

The product has been tested by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and Habitat for Humanity, with stellar results. Meanwhile, the company's patents are moving through unchallenged, a rare event.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.ACCUFRAME.COM





ClarkDietrich Strait-Flex Pro-Flex300

ClarkDietrich's *Strait-Flex Pro-Flex300* is a muddable, PVC-free flexible corner bead that wipes down in as little as one pass and adjusts to any angle to create perfect inside and outside 90-degree and off-angle corners.

Pro-Flex300 redefines the sustainability profile of interior finishing by simultaneously addressing material health, jobsite waste, and resource consumption. It is one of the only corner beads in the industry to offer a third-party verified Health Product Declaration (HPD) proving the absence of Red List chemicals, plus it eradicates cutoff waste through roll-dispensed application and cuts joint compound usage by half.

Pro-Flex300's unique design requires 50 percent less joint compound to finish compared to standard beads. This massive reduction cascades through the supply chain: It means fewer raw materials mined (gypsum/limestone), less water used onsite for mixing, and significantly reduced transportation emissions associated with shipping heavy pails of compound. FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.CLARKDIETRICH.COM

Belgard Diamond Pro Air Retaining Wall Systems

Belgard's *Diamond Pro Air* reimagines how retaining wall systems are manufactured, transported and installed. Built on the proven performance of the original *Diamond Pro*, a staple for more than 30 years, *Diamond Pro Air* delivers impactful sustainability benefits without compromising strength or efficiency.

Diamond Pro Air is engineered to be 30 percent lighter, reducing the amount of raw material needed for production. This optimization conserves natural resources, lowers energy use, and generates less waste, reducing its carbon footprint. It also allows for 25 percent more wall block to be shipped per truckload, resulting in fewer trips, reduced fuel consumption, and lower emissions. This efficiency supports environmental protection, and reduces logistics costs and demands.

Diamond Pro Air continues to demonstrate its sustainable impact on the jobsite. Its ability to construct near-vertical walls up to 12 feet high minimizes excavation and preserves more land, maximizing usable space, and helps prevent material waste.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.BELGARD.COM



OPTA Re-Act 4

Re-Act-4 is a fine, white colored, amorphous glass powder made from 100 percent post-consumer and industrial recycled glass with excellent pozzolanic properties and a similar water demand to ordinary Portland cement. The product is environmentally safe, has high performance, and includes sustainable secondary cementitious materials designed to enhance modern concrete. These pozzolans provide a low-carbon alternative to traditional cement.

These versatile materials are used across a wide range of applications, including ultra-high-performance concrete, architectural precast, ready-mix concrete, and premium infrastructure projects requiring long-term resilience. By replacing a portion of cement with recycled glass pozzolan, concrete producers can significantly reduce environmental impact, achieving up to a 20:1 reduction in CO₂ emissions compared to cement alone.

Re-Act-4 offers measurable improvements over many conventional and "green" alternatives, including increased compressive strength, enhanced durability, greater corrosion resistance, and superior mitigation of alkali-silica reaction.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://OPTA-GROUP.COM](https://OPTA-GROUP.COM)



LP SmartSide®
TRIM & SIDING



LP BurnGuard™
FRT OSB

PRODUCTS ENGINEERED FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Our award-winning products are built to last. From our most recent innovations to the trusted products we have been making for decades, LP® products are engineered to help withstand many weather conditions, delivering great durability and value.

100% RESPONSIBLY SOURCED FIBER

99% OF EACH LOG IS ULTIMATELY UTILIZED, EITHER AS FINISHED PRODUCT OR BIOMASS FUEL



For more information, visit LPCorp.com/Sustainability

GREEN BUILDER SUSTAINABLE BRAND INDEX 2026

When our readers think about sustainable building, here's who they think does it best.



BY ALAN NADITZ

CREDIT: iStock/Andrzej Rostek

Familiarity breeds success. The top spots in our annual Brand Index belong to companies that are, in some cases, literally household names. Eighty percent of the winners this time are “the big guys,” in part because they have the ability to get the word out about their products. But there are newcomers that made their mark, thanks to budget friendly and always welcome word of mouth.

To identify the winners, results in three distinct categories—our traditional survey data, market visibility or “mentions,” and public sentiment—are averaged to create a Brand Index Score and derive a company’s final ranking among its peers.

Overall, our survey shows where a company is doing well, and which improvements it might need to make to move up the ranks or keep its grip at the top.

ABB	Greenfiber	Sherwin-Williams
Accsys	Greenheck	Sika Corporation
Acuity Brands Lighting	Haas	Simpson
ADI/Snap One	Hansgrohe USA	Simpson Strong Tie
AHF	Hanwha Surfaces	Solar & Palau Ventilation
Air King	Henry	Group
Alarm.com	Hormann	Sonnen
Amarr	Huber Engineered Woods	SPAN
Amazon	IKEA	Steibel Eltron
American Standard	Interface	Stellantis
American Woodmark	James Hardie	Sub-Zero
Andersen	Jeld-Wen	Sunrun
A.O. Smith	JinkoSolar	Sylvania
Apple	Johns Manville	Takagi
Applegate Insulation	Keene Building Products	TAMKO
AprilAire	Kelly Moore	Therma-Tru
Atlas Roofing	Kichler	Thomas Lighting
AZEK	Kingspan	TOTO
BASF	Knauf	Toyota
Barrette Outdoor Living	Kohler	Trane
Behr	hansgrohe	Tremco
Benjamin Moore	Hanwa Solutions	Trespa
Boise Cascade	Lamps Plus	Trex
Bosch	Lauson	TruStile
Bradford White	LEDVANCE	Typar
Brilliant Smart Home	Lennox	UPF
System	Leviton	Uponor
Broan-NuTone	LG	Valspar
Cabinetnetworks Group	Liebherr	Viance
Caesarstone	LIXIL	Viking
CALI Floors	Loewen	Vine
Cambia by NFP	Logix	Vivint
Cambria	LP Building Solutions	Wayne-Dalton
Canadian Solar	Ludowici	Weather Shield
Carlisle	Lunawood	Wellborn Cabinet
Carrier	LUX	West Fraser
CertainTeed	LX Hausys	Western Forest Products
Chevrolet	Marvin	Westlake Royal Building
ClimateMaster	Masonite	Products
Clopay	MasterBrand	Weyerhaeuser
Cooper Lighting Solutions	Mercedes-Benz	Whirlpool
Cornerstone Building	MITER Brands	Wilsonart
Brands	Miele	Windsor
Cosentino	Milliken	Woodgrain
Craft Flooring	Mitsubishi Electric HVAC	Wood-Mode
CREE	Modern Mill	York
Crystal Cabinet Works	Moen	Zehnder
Daikin	Mohawk	
Daltile	Mullican	
Decra	Navien	
Delta	NCFI	
Delta Faucet	Neolith	
Delta Millworks	Niagara Conservation	
Dunn Edwards	Nice	
DuPont	Nissan	
DuPont Surfaces	Nobilia	
Eaton	Noritz	
ecobee	NUDURA	
ECOS	Overhead Door Company	
EcoStar	Owens Corning	
EDCO	Panasonic	
Electrolux	Panda	
Emerson	PaperStone	
Enviroshake	Pella	
Fabral	Pfister	
Fantech	Phillips	
Fiberon	Plastpro	
First Solar	PPG	
Forbo	Premier Building Systems	
Ford	Progress Lighting	
Formica Group	ProVia	
Fox Blocks	Raynor	
GAF	Renewaire	
GE Appliances	Resideo	
GE Lighting	Rheem	
Geberit	Rinnai	
Generac	Rockwool	
Georgia-Pacific	ROMABIO	
Gerber Plumbing Fixtures	Samsung	
Glidden	Savant Systems	
GMC	Schneider Electric USA	
Google	Shaw	

GET THE WORD APPLIANCES OUT.

Word of mouth will get you far. GE takes the top spot, likely because of the energy- and water-saving features in several product lines. Three-time (and now former) champ LG is as popular as ever—it finishes in the top 3 for the sixth straight time—but GE edged out the top slot.



APPLIANCES

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	GE Appliances <i>(Haier, GE, Profile, Café, Fisher & Paykel, Monogram)</i>	1.20	1	3	1
2	Bosch <i>(Bosch, Gaggenau, Thermador)</i>	2.50	1	4	5
3	LG <i>(Signature Kitchen Suite)</i>	3.40	4	1	3
4	Whirlpool <i>(Whirlpool, Jenn-Air, KitchenAid, Maytag)</i>	3.60	3	6	4
5	Samsung <i>(Samsung; Dacor)</i>	3.80	5	2	2
6	Sub-Zero <i>(Wolf)</i>	6.30	6	9	6
7	Miele	7.70	8	5	8
8	Viking	7.90	7	10	9
9	Electrolux <i>(Electrolux, Frigidaire, Westinghouse)</i>	8.30	9	8	7
10	Liebherr	9.70	10	7	10

CABINETS AND SHELVING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	IKEA	1.9	1	4	3
1	Cabinetworks Group <i>((KraftMaid, MasterCraft, Merillat, Medallion)</i>	1.9	1	1	4
3	American Woodmark	2.6	1	5	5
4	MasterBrand <i>(Aristokraft, Decora, Diamond, Omega)</i>	2.9	4	2	1
5	Crystal Cabinet Works	3.8	5	2	2
6	Wellborn Cabinet	5.9	6	5	6
7	Wood-Mode	7.1	7	5	8
8	Nobilis	7.4	8	5	7



COMPETITIVE CABINETRY.

Competitive cabinetry. A continual trend toward do-it-yourself remodeling keeps IKEA at the forefront of consumers' minds, although it's not the most respected of our surveyed cabinets and shelving manufacturers. Cabinetworks Group, with its diverse product line, and American Woodmark, with a high-end but more-affordable cabinetry, are applying sales pressure like never before.

BUILDING WRAP

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	DuPont (Tyvek HomeWrap, Weathermate)	1.6	1	4	2
2	CertainTeed (CertaWrap)	4.6	5	4	4
2	LP Building Solutions (WeatherLogic)	4.6	3	4	8
2	Tremco (EnviroDri)	4.6	2	4	10
5	Owens Corning (PinkWrap)	6.1	9	4	1
5	Henry (Blueskin; WeatherSmart)	6.1	6	4	7
5	Georgia-Pacific (Forcefield)	6.1	4	4	11
8	Typar (HouseWrap)	6.2	8	2	4
9	Huber Engineered Woods (ZIP System)	7.2	7	3	9
10	Kingspan	8.2	12	1	3

TIGHT FIT.

It was a wild year for wrap makers, with everybody but chart topper DuPont jockeying for position in the Building Wrap category. The manufacturer of *Tyvek* and *Weathermate* continues to be the first one that comes to mind in this key product category.



DuPont

POSITIVE PR.

Strong marketing can make all the difference. Cosentino moves from middle of the pack in 2025 to the top in 2026 by merely getting the word out about its fashionable merchandise. Runner-up Cambria keeps doing its thing, with mixed success: thumbs up from the public for selection but less-than-stellar reaction for the company overall.



Cosentino

COUNTERTOPS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Cosentino (Eco, Dektone)	2.2	3	1	1
2	Cambria	2.6	1	8	4
3	Formica Group	3.4	2	4	6
4	DuPont Surfaces (Corian)	5.5	5	10	5
5	Caesarstone	6.4	7	13	3
6	PaperStone	7.1	3	8	15
7	Hanwha Surfaces (HanStone)	8.1	5	15	12
8	Neolith	8.5	8	7	10
9	LX Hausys (Viatera)	8.9	10	5	8
10	Wilsonart	9.2	10	11	7



Trex

NATURE’S CHOICE.

Yet again—16 straight years and counting—it’s Trex, then everybody else. The company’s reputation as a top-notch recycled decking provider keeps it well ahead of competitors in our survey. Along with runners-up Fiberon and Azek, they have a largely positive reputation online, along with strong brand appreciation.

DECKING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Trex	1.8	1	9	1
2	Fiberon	3.4	2	7	5
3	AZEK (TimberTech)	3.6	4	6	2
4	Westlake Royal Building Products (Zuri)	4.6	4	4	6
4	Modern Mill (ACRE)	4.6	4	1	7
6	TAMKO (Envision)	6	4	12	8
7	Viance	7.5	3	12	15
8	Western Forest Products (TRUESTYLE)	7.7	4	2	17
9	Barrette Outdoor Living (MoistureShield, DuraLife, Evernew)	7.7	9	11	4
10	UFP (Deckorators)	8.6	12	5	3

ENERGY STORAGE

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Generac	1.4	1	5	1
2	Panasonic (EVERVOLT)	2.1	2	3	2
3	Canadian Solar	2.9	3	2	3
4	sonnen	3.7	4	1	4
5	Jinko (JinkoSolar)	4.9	5	4	5

Generac



POWER PLAY.

There’s not a lot of year-to-year movement here, possibly because not a lot has changed, and there are not many players. But that also means no one is truly doing badly. Generac once again sets the bar pretty high, but the space between its Brand Index Score and that of fifth-place Jinko has decreased by 50 percent since 2025.

DOORS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Simpson	1.6	2	1	1
2	Therma-Tru	2	1	2	4
3	Masonite	2.5	2	4	3
4	ProVia	3.3	4	3	2
5	Plastpro	5.1	5	6	5
6	TruStile	5.9	6	5	6

SHOWN THE DOOR.

The top 3 here continue to dominate the three survey categories. Simpson, Therma-Tru and Masonite regularly produce items that the public appreciates in terms of design, quality and pricing. That's going to make it hard for any of the other companies on our list to move up, but the path forward is clear.



Simpson



Mohawk

UNDERFOOT SECURITY.

Mohawk remains the industry's most-respected flooring maker, but it also remains a mystery for consumers. But that's the case for most of the top 5. Although a decline in the residential market has slowed the industry as a whole, a continually growing interest in hard surface products is keeping everybody afloat.

FLOORING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Mohawk	2.2	1	7	3
2	Shaw	2.6	2	8	2
3	Forbo	3.4	2	4	6
4	Milliken	5.1	4	6	7
5	AHF Products (Armstrong Flooring)	5.2	5	1	5
6	Mullican	6.3	5	3	10
7	Daltile (Marazzi)	7	8	10	4
8	Interface	11	11	5	1
9	CALI Floors	9	9	8	9
10	Craft Flooring	7	7	12	12



Overhead Door Company

STILL OPENING DOORS.

Demand for smart technology and controls continues to grow, and by extension, so does a need for smart garage doors. The same gang from our inaugural recognition of this category in 2025 is at it again, and the results are just as positive.

GARAGE DOORS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Overhead Door Company	1.9	2	4	1
2	Clopay	2.9	3	5	2
3	Wayne-Dalton	3.3	3	3	4
4	Woodgrain (Windsor Windows & Doors)	3.4	1	7	7
5	Raynor	4.6	5	1	5
6	Amarr	5.1	6	6	3
7	Hormann	5.6	6	2	6
8	Haas	8	8	8	8

HVAC

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Trane (RunTru/American Standard)	2.8	1	10	4
2	LG	4	3	4	6
3	Bosch	4.1	3	8	5
4	Lennox	4.2	2	9	7
5	Carrier	4.5	5	6	3
6	Mitsubishi Electric HVAC	5.3	7	5	2
7	Rheem	5.7	5	3	8
8	York	5.9	9	2	1
9	ClimateMaster	8.9	8	11	10
10	Daikin (Goodman)	9.7	9	1	14

HEAT PUMPS RULE.

Trane has a solid lead over the industry’s other HVAC products. High-performance heat pump systems dominate online conversations, reflecting growing consumer demand for efficiency, electrification, and long-term cost savings. As expectations rise, performance and innovation are becoming key differentiators in the category.



Trane

HOT WATER SYSTEMS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Rheem	2.2	2	4	2
2	Bosch	2.5	1	10	3
3	Rinnai	3.8	5	5	1
4	A.O. Smith	4.4	3	8	6
5	Navien	5.1	6	3	4
6	American Standard	5.4	3	9	9
7	Noritz	6.2	6	2	8
8	Bradford White	7.6	9	7	5
9	Takagi	7.9	8	1	10
10	Stiebel Eltron	8.7	10	6	7



Rheem

HOTTER THAN EVER.

The fact Rheem finished at the top of this category for a second year is no surprise. The true mystery is what happened to runner-up Bosch, which is usually a public favorite but this time ended up last in public sentiment. Third-place Rinnai experienced the opposite. But these quirks aside, the hot water product makers are happily chugging along.

HOLDING STEADY.

Owens Corning is king of the hill yet again, but its lead has been steadily shrinking. Some of that may come from Millennials, who are now homebuyers and might not see a difference in the available products. The company and its top competitors are all doing the right thing.



Owens Corning

INSULATION

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Owens Corning	2.7	2	6	3
2	DuPont	3.3	4	6	1
3	Rockwool	4.2	3	3	7
4	Greenfiber	4.8	1	9	11
5	BASF	5	7	2	2
6	Johns Manville	5.9	5	11	6
7	Carlisle <i>(Insulfoam EPS; SealTite Spray Foam)</i>	7.4	6	11	9
8	NCFI <i>(InsulStar)</i>	7.9	7	1	12
9	CertainTeed	8.2	9	4	8
10	Applegate Insulation	9.5	9	11	10

BRIGHT TIMES.

Same year, same result: Philips finishes atop our survey, a favorite in all categories. GE Lighting is the runner up, gaining popularity and staying on the leader's heels. Both front runners are being propelled by an increased interest in LED lighting, especially in North America.



LIGHTING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Philips	1.8	2	3	1
2	GE Lighting (SAVANT)	2.4	1	6	4
3	CREE	4.2	4	9	3
4	Sylvania	4.3	3	7	6
5	Cooper Lighting Solutions (HALO)	4.7	4	8	5
6	Kichler	5	4	2	8
7	Progress Lighting	7	7	1	9
8	LEDVANCE	8.6	9	11	7
9	Acuity Brands Lighting (Juno, Lithonia)	9.5	14	5	2
10	Thomas Lighting	9.6	7	12	14

PLUMBING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Kohler	1.6	1	4	2
2	Moen	2.3	2	2	3
2	Delta Faucet Co. (Brizo)	2.3	3	2	1
4	TOTO	4.2	4	6	4
5	Hansgrohe USA	5.2	5	1	7
6	Geberit	7.1	8	5	6
6	Gerber Plumbing Fixtures	7.1	6	8	9
8	LIXIL (American Standard)	7.8	9	9	5
9	Niagara Conservation	8.2	7	10	10
10	Pfister	9.1	10	7	8



PIPE DREAMS.

Our top 3 plumbing manufacturers ratcheted up public relations efforts in 2025, and they've paid off. Kohler, Moen and Delta Faucet are breaking away from the pack, although things could get dicey in the coming year if the economy continues to stall and actions such as home remodeling become luxuries.

PAINTS AND COATINGS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Sherwin-Williams	1	1	2	1
2	Benjamin Moore	2.8	2	7	3
3	Valspar	4.4	4	5	5
4	Behr	4.5	5	3	4
5	ECOS	4.6	3	4	8
6	PPG <i>(Olympic)</i>	4.9	7	1	2
7	Glidden	6.6	6	9	7
8	Dunn Edwards	7.7	9	5	6
9	Kelly Moore	7.9	7	10	9
10	ROMABIO	9.8	10	8	10



Sherwin-Williams

CAREFUL COVERINGS.

An almost-perfect rating in our survey makes Sherwin-Williams the brand to beat. That may continue in 2026, although the industry could be close to flatlining due to slower market growth stemming from higher interest rates, fewer home purchases and continued labor shortages.

SUNNY OUTLOOK.

Being second best is usually not the greatest—except for First Solar, which swept the runner-up totals but is at the top of our list because of consistently good quality, public acceptance and word of mouth. The photovoltaic category in general is becoming more appreciated, with every company’s scores improving by at least 20 percent from 2025.



First Solar

PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	First Solar	2	2	2	2
2	Panasonic	2.7	1	3	6
3	Sunrun	2.8	4	1	1
4	CertainTeed	4.8	3	6	8
5	JinkoSolar	5.6	5	5	7
6	SunPower <i>(formerly Complete Solaria)</i>	5.7	6	6	5
7	Hanwa Solutions <i>(Qcells; formerly Hanwha Q CELLS)</i>	6	7	6	4
8	Canadian Solar	6.1	8	4	3



GAF (Timberline)

ROCKY RIDE AHEAD.

GAF has improved its personae steadily over the past few years and is now the roofing industry's No. 1 provider. There's still some hesitancy among consumers, but that's true for all of the top 3. Recycled and durable products such as metal Atlas Roofing and EcoStar continue to capture the attention of contractors for their sustainable narrative.

ROOFING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	GAF (Timberline)	2.7	3	6	1
2	Owens Corning	3.7	4	7	2
3	Atlas Roofing	4	2	10	6
4	Westlake Royal Building Products (Boral, DaVinci Roofscapes, U.S. Tile, United Steel)	4.1	4	5	4
5	EcoStar	4.3	1	4	11
6	CertainTeed	4.8	6	3	3
7	EDCO	7.9	8	1	10
8	Fabral	9.4	8	10	12
9	Enviroshake	9.4	7	10	14
10	Decra	10.1	12	8	7
10	Cornerstone Building Brands (Ply Gem)	10.1	12	2	9

SMART TECH TROUBLES.

The market war continues between Amazon and Google, which both have well-known smart home products—Alexa and Nest, respectively—that are losing steam with consumers. These smart tools, as well as those from competitors, continue to sell, and the market is still growing. But the survey results hint at a loss of identity.



Amazon

SMART HOME TECHNOLOGY

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Amazon (Alexa)	1.9	1	7	2
2	Google (Nest)	2.1	2	6	1
3	Apple (Homekit)	3.1	3	4	3
4	Samsung (SmartThings)	3.8	4	2	4
5	Resideo (Honeywell Home)	4.4	4	5	5
6	Vivint	6.8	6	8	8
7	Alarm.com	7.5	6	12	9
8	Leviton	8.1	6	9	12
9	Nice (Nortek, Elan)	8.7	11	3	6

SIDING

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	James Hardie	1.8	1	6	2
2	LP Building Solutions (Smartside)	2.1	2	6	1
3	Westlake Royal Building Products (Cultured Stone, Eldorado Stone, Telesteria, Cedar Renditions, Celect)	3.2	3	5	3
4	Cambia by NFP	6.3	5	12	7
5	Accsys (Accoya)	7.3	5	10	11
6	Delta Millworks	7.5	4	12	13
7	Lunawood	8.4	5	12	14
8	AZEK	9.5	12	11	4
9	Sika Corporation (LaHabra)	9.7	8	4	15
10	Trespa	10.4	12	2	10



SIDE SHOWS.

For a fourth year, James Hardie, LP Building Solutions, and Westlake Royal Building Products are the industry's most highly regarded siding manufacturers, as well as the most widely talked about. The continued success of all three shows that there is still room for wooden and wood replacement siding among homeowners.

GROWING SMARTER.

"The Big Four" is now "The Big Six," with Eaton and ABB joining an already tight field and making most of it a tossup within the industry and among consumers. Schneider Electric leads the pack thanks to a balanced domination in all survey fields, while former frontrunner Leviton could use a PR boost to push it back to the top.



Schneider Electric

SMART PANELS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Schneider Electric U.S.A.	1.8	2	3	1
2	Leviton	2.3	1	2	5
3	Eaton	4.1	4	5	4
3	Savant Systems	4.1	3	5	6
5	ABB	4.3	6	1	2
5	SPAN	4.3	5	4	3



LP Building Solutions

NOT-SO-FIRMLY HELD.

In the Structural field, there's LP Building Solutions and Boise Cascade, and then there's everybody else. Given this category's revolving door—no company has retained high popularity with the public for more than one year over the past decade—the two pack leaders should focus on consumer sentiment to stay out of the identity crisis-based lower level.

STRUCTURAL

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	LP Building Solutions	1.5	1	6	1
2	Boise Cascade	3.1	2	7	4
3	Georgia-Pacific	5.9	8	5	2
4	Premier Building Systems	6.1	3	1	14
4	West Fraser <i>(Norbord, Ainsworth)</i>	6.1	8	4	3
6	Western Forest Products	6.4	5	7	9
6	Fox Blocks	6.4	4	7	11
8	Simpson Strong Tie	6.5	8	2	5
9	Nudura ICF	7.3	8	7	6
10	Logix	7.3	5	7	12



Panasonic

UPPER ECHELON.

Panasonic and its Healthy Indoor Living Solutions—energy recovery ventilators, smart controls, atmosphere and inline fan solutions, and ventilation and purification—remain first choice within the Ventilation industry. New building codes have pushed mechanical solutions deeper into the mainstream construction flow.

VENTILATION

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Panasonic	1.5	1	3	2
2	Solar & Palau Ventilation Group <i>(SGP)</i>	3.9	5	6	1
3	AprilAire	4.1	4	5	4
4	Broan-NuTone	4.6	3	4	8
5	Air King	4.7	2	8	9
6	Renewaire	5	5	2	6
7	Delta <i>(Delta Breez)</i>	6	5	9	7
8	Fantech <i>(SystemAir)</i>	6.4	8	7	3
9	Greenheck	7.6	10	1	5
10	Zehnder	9.3	9	9	10

THERMOSTATS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Google <i>(Nest)</i>	1.3	1	4	1
2	ecobee	2.6	3	2	2
3	Bosch	3.5	2	8	5
4	Resideo <i>(Honeywell Home)</i>	3.8	4	5	3
5	Carrier	4.5	5	3	4
6	LUX	5.2	5	1	7
7	Emerson <i>(Sensi)</i>	5.5	5	7	6
8	Vine	7.8	8	6	8

STILL HOT.

You can't argue with stability—if you're at the top of the list. Most of the eight Thermostats category contenders have retained their chart positions for three years, with virtually the same Brand Index Scores. Google certainly isn't complaining too loudly, as it continues to gain kudos from the industry and consumers.



CHARGING AHEAD.

Andersen took last year's survey results seriously and greatly improved its public image, moving from dead last (18th) in public sentiment in 2025, to first place this year. Combined with its already rock-solid industry appearance and word of mouth scores, the windows giant now has a stranglehold on the market.



www.greenbuildermedia.com

WINDOWS

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Andersen	1.6	1	1	3
2	Pella	3.6	2	6	6
3	Marvin	4.4	4	5	5
4	Jeld-Wen	4.9	3	7	8
5	Windsor	5.8	5	7	7
6	Cornerstone Building Brands <i>(Ply Gem, Simonton)</i>	6.2	9	2	2
7	Weather Shield	6.4	5	7	9
8	Panda	7.5	7	3	10
9	MITER Brands <i>(MI Windows & Doors, Milgard, PGT)</i>	7.9	12	4	1
10	Loewen	8.8	7	7	13



FEELING FORD.

An almost perfect industry rating, combined with top-level public sentiment and marketing, has made Ford No. 1 on our Work Vehicles list. The company’s promotion of vehicle capability and brand loyalty—to capitalize on an ongoing “Made in America” sentiment—has given it a narrow lead over Toyota. Expect more of the same in 2026.

WORK VEHICLES

RANK	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
★	Ford	1.6	2	1	1
2	Toyota	1.7	1	2	3
3	Chevrolet	3.4	3	4	4
4	Nissan	4.8	4	6	6
5	Mercedes Benz	4.9	6	7	2
6	GMC	5.4	5	3	7
7	Stellantis (RAM)	6.2	7	5	5

BUBBLING UNDER.

Here are some companies that just missed the top 10 in their categories this year. A few are veterans; others are newcomers. All of them need to fine tune a bit to move into the upper echelon of our 2027 listings.

CATEGORY	COMPANY	INDEX AVG	SURVEY DATA	SENTIMENT	MENTIONS
Building Wrap	Keene Building Products <i>(Driwall)</i>	9.7	9	4	13
Countertops	Daltile	10.1	10	14	9
Decking	CALI Floors	9.6	9	12	10
Flooring	Lauzon	8	10	2	11
HVAC	Uponor	11	9	12	12
Insulation	Knauf	9.9	13	9	4
Lighting	Lamps Plus	10	11	4	10
Roofing	Ludowici	10.4	12	8	8

VISION HOUSE HICKORY GROVE

Green Builder Media's latest VISION House project is a 16-unit multifamily, prefab, net zero workforce housing project.



HICKORY GROVE

With a **build-to-rent model** and a focus on livability, the VISION House Hickory Grove blends affordability with forward-thinking design. Each home in this community is built for performance and resilience. Using volumetric modular construction, the project reduces waste, controls costs, and shortens build time. High-efficiency systems, solar energy, battery storage, airtight envelopes, and healthy ventilation ensure comfort, durability, and low utility costs. Smart home technology and climate-ready design round out the vision for future-proof housing.

Follow the VISION House Hickory Grove's progress at:
<https://www.greenbuildermedia.com/vision-house-hickory-grove>

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Making Connections:

Modular Construction and Missing Middle Housing

The right partners keep sustainability and affordability at the forefront of this North Carolina workforce housing development.

BY MICHELE LERNER

Stackable sizes. The modular pieces for Duke Street Cottages—a template for VISION House Hickory Grove—are eventually stacked on top of each other to accommodate lot size and enable construction of more affordable buildings. CREDIT: COURTESY OF SOUTHERN ENERGY MANAGEMENT



A few months before the devastation of Hurricane Helene hit Asheville in 2024, Quartz Properties had started construction on a 90-unit, build-to-rent modular community of duplexes and single-family homes.

“We try to address the median market of workforce or attainable housing – not affordable housing and not the luxury end,” says David Roover, chief growth officer and founding partner of Quartz Properties, a modular home builder in North Carolina and consultant for other builders new to modular construction. “Those buildings stood up to Hurricane Helene, which is a testament to their resilience since they weren’t complete at the time. The development was immediately filled when we finished it after the storm because so many people needed a place to live, especially first responders and others who lived in the area or came here to help rebuild.”

Demand for workforce or attainable housing – designed for long term affordability for teachers, health care workers, first responders, retirees and young people establishing their first household – continues to grow throughout the U.S. Sometimes referred to as “missing middle” housing, these are properties that people can rent or buy when they lack the income for more costly homes and yet make too much money to qualify for subsidies.

At VISION House Hickory Grove, a partnership between Rob Howard, president of Howard Building Science in Granite Falls, North Carolina, and Green Builder Media, a cluster of 16 sustainable, energy efficient and attainable rental homes will be built. These homes will demonstrate the importance of building high performance homes at every price point for long-term resilience to climate impacts and to keep operational costs in check.

At VISION House Hickory Grove, Howard and Green Builder Media are working with experts in modular construction including Vantem, a modular builder headquartered in Raleigh, N.C. with factories in South Carolina and Georgia, and Quartz Properties to build highly efficient homes.

“Not every modular manufacturer is familiar with multifamily construction or green building,” says Steve Payne, executive vice president of business development for Vantem. “Typically, modular companies build single-family homes from simple versions to custom homes. VISION House Hickory Grove is unusual in that the

buildings look like single-family homes, but each building holds four units.”

Since the units are stacked on top of each other rather than side-by-side – designed to fit on the available land – they must be built to the International Building Code (IBC) for commercial buildings rather than to the International Residential Code (IRC) for residential buildings, Payne explained. For example, this means the VISION House Hickory Grove buildings will need fire sprinklers.

FACTORY-BUILT HIGH-PERFORMANCE HOMES

Modular construction provides numerous benefits, but only if the developer and builder find the right manufacturer, Payne says.

“You need a team of design and technical professionals that can provide a suite of services to move the entire project down the road,” he says. “The modular partner should be able to provide these services to minimize field responsibilities.”

Even builders who think they’re ready to embrace modular components over site-built housing may need some additional help.

“A lot of builders think that if they do traditional construction, they can do this too, but it can be challenging for them the first time they order from a factory,” Roover says. “Consultants like us can help with everything from the permits to the trim.”

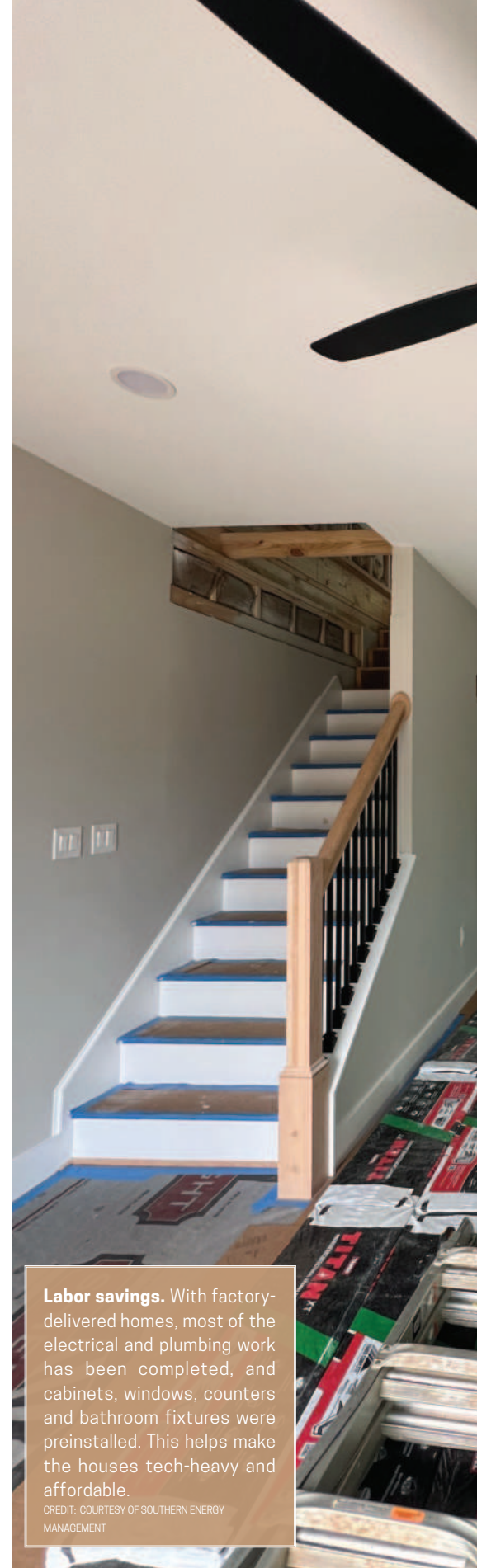
Modular construction is inherently green, Payne says, because there’s less waste when you’re doing precision cutting in a controlled factory environment.

“We use more recycled materials, plus the buildings are tighter for energy efficiency,” he says. “There’s an upfront cost when you build high efficiency homes, but over a period of time the savings from these high-performance homes neutralizes upfront costs.”

Modular buildings are indistinguishable from site-built buildings once they’re complete, Payne says. He notes that “you don’t have to sacrifice anything in terms of materials or elevations.”

Typically, modular buildings outperform site-built properties during intense storms, according to Payne.

“Modular homes have more material content than traditionally built homes, which contributes to their durability,” Payne says. “Factory built framing systems are typically superior to the framing for site-built houses. We make tighter cuts, so there’s less air infiltration, we frame inside-out and seal all the penetrations for better energy performance.”



Labor savings. With factory-delivered homes, most of the electrical and plumbing work has been completed, and cabinets, windows, counters and bathroom fixtures were preinstalled. This helps make the houses tech-heavy and affordable.

CREDIT: COURTESY OF SOUTHERN ENERGY MANAGEMENT



THE MODULAR-WORKFORCE CONNECTION

Many builders like to use modular construction for custom homes, but at VISION House Hickory Grove the factory is being used for workforce housing.

“We wanted to flip it and use industrialized construction with a build-and-repeat method for attainable housing,” Roover says. “Plus, modular homes contribute to lower operating costs because they’re all electric and you can increase insulation easily, which makes them more affordable over the long term.”

Some of the benefits of modular construction that contribute to reduced upfront and ongoing costs include:

- **Labor savings.** Factory delivered homes mitigate the need for framing and drywall contractors, Payne says. In addition, 75 percent of the electrical work and 75 percent of the plumbing work is done. “We provide volumetric modular buildings, filling each box with as much content as possible in the factory,” he says. “We install cabinets, windows, counters, bathroom fixtures – anything we can. That offsets some of the cost of the high-tech efficiency upgrades.”
- **Speed.** Construction finance carrying costs are lower when you speed construction with modular components, Roover says. “We built those 90 houses in Asheville in 15 months,” he says.
- **Quality.** In order to transport these modular components, they must be built with a better structural framework, Roover says. That makes them as good as or better than site-built homes, he says.
- **Cost certainty:** Since the modular process requires ordering manufacturers to build

specific parts, there are very few change orders. Roover says. “Once you order it, you’re not changing it,” he says.

- **Time certainty:** The right factory will produce modular parts by a deadline, so you need to be ready onsite to install them, Roover says. You end up with fewer punch list items since the components are built and inspected in a controlled factory environment, he says.

VISION HOUSE HICKORY GROVE PREPARED TO PERFORM

Vantem and Arris, a company Vantem acquired in recent years, have built more than 10 million square feet of modular multifamily buildings. Each building at VISION House Hickory Grove will have two smaller first-floor units with one bedroom and one bathroom, with two two-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom units upstairs.

Vantem will provide the modular units and Quartz Properties will install them.

“We’ll set the Hickory Grove buildings, which means we coordinate the transportation including the crane onsite that takes the modular parts from their trucks to set them on the foundation,” Roover says. “Then we hoist the roof, which usually comes folded. From there, we ‘stitch’ the modular boxes together to specific architectural plans.”

Roover anticipates that it will take about a day to stack the boxes at Hickory Grove, then another day to get the roof weathertight, plus one more day to complete the “marriage line” bolting. Some finishing touches will be required after that to get the homes ready for occupancy.

“These will be high performance homes straight out of the gate,” Roover says. “They’re environmentally friendly with less waste.” **GB**



Piece by piece. Modular home construction, such as this project offered by VISION House Hickory Grove contractor and adviser VANTEM, can reduce building timelines, lower costs, reduce waste and result in a more energy efficient residence. CREDIT: VANTEM

Resilient by Design and Construction



Safety and resilience. The IBHS FORTIFIED construction method includes standards for new construction and existing homes that need renovation, especially post-disaster, including stronger garage doors and roofs. CREDIT: ADDISON HOMES AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY BUILDING AMERICA SOLUTION CENTER

While modular home construction can reduce building timelines, lower costs, reduce waste and result in a more energy efficient residence, factory-built homes can also be more resilient. Technology such as continuous air barriers and stronger insulation installed at the modular plant can enhance the performance of a home. At VISION House Hickory Grove, the modular construction will include **FORTIFIED** home features.

Decades of research into climate-related damage to residential and commercial buildings led to the development of the FORTIFIED construction method.

“A FORTIFIED certification is like an ENERGY STAR certification for resilience,” says Fred Malik, managing director of the Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS), which developed the FORTIFIED program.

Builders and remodelers can use the FORTIFIED standards for new construction and existing homes that need renovation, especially post-disaster. “A FORTIFIED roof can be largely completed in a factory,” Malik says.

Other elements required to reach FORTIFIED

Silver and Gold levels include stronger garage doors and attached structures, along with other structural improvements.

Some insurance companies offer a discount to homeowners who have a FORTIFIED roof, says Gina Hardy, CEO of the North Carolina Insurance Underwriting Association (NCIUA) and the North Carolina Joint Underwriting Association (NCJUA).

“In North Carolina, researchers analyzed claims and found that there was a 52 percent reduction in claims for FORTIFIED homes after non-named storms, and a 34.5 percent reduction in claims for named tropical storms and hurricanes,” Hardy says. “Anything that can make a home more durable and resilient is good from an insurance point of view.”

Many state and local governments provide grants for homeowners to invest in a FORTIFIED roof or other certification, she says. The certification can be transferred to the next owner for an insurance discount, too.

“In 2025, researchers at the University of Alabama studied insurance claims and found that homeowners were 70 percent less likely to make a claim if they had a FORTIFIED roof,” Malik says. “Homeowners who had to file a claim had an

average claim that was 30 percent less costly than homeowners who didn’t have a FORTIFIED roof.”

Malik advocates building modular homes because strength and resilience features can be systematized for safety. “Modular home factories also have a stable, trained workforce, which can help you fast track the learning curve when new technology is introduced,” he says.

Adding FORTIFIED features at the factory level requires a relatively modest investment and generates better performance along with safety for residents and the community.

“Factory building is the only way to meet the standards of a high-performance home and build homes that will be affordable in perpetuity, which is our goal,” says Chris Moeller, founder and CEO of Orion Growth and Pathways Communities, which builds homes and communities using modular construction. “We need products that will outlive us and be resilient in 100 years.”

Modular construction provides cost savings because it cuts production time in half, according to Moeller. In addition, savings are generated by a shorter debt service requirement, a shorter timeline for the project manager, onsite trailer and crane.

THE RIGHT STUFF



While modular construction packs a lot of affordability, resilience and sustainability elements into VISION House Hickory Grove, the products, systems and features in these multifamily buildings add resilience, comfort and energy efficiency for residents.

“VISION House Hickory Grove will reach even higher performance standards because of the high-tech materials deployed by the sponsors, such as the sheathing, insulation, high efficiency mechanical systems and the solar component,” says Steve Payne, executive vice president of business development for multifamily project developer Vantem.

SPONSORS FOR VISION HOUSE HICKORY GROVE AND THEIR INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS INCLUDE:

- **Broan:** Ventilation and ERVs for clean indoor air
 - **Fabral:** Durable, beautiful metal roofing
 - **Huber Engineered Woods:** ZIP System sheathing for enhanced moisture resistance and air sealing
 - **Knauf:** High performance insulation designed to make homes healthier, quieter, and more comfortable.
 - **JinkoSolar:** High-efficiency photovoltaics
 - **LG:** Energy-efficient heat pump HVAC systems and water heaters, plus high-performance appliances
 - **LP:** Carbon-neutral engineered siding
 - **Opta:** Advanced low-carbon concrete using recycled glass
 - **Schneider Electric:** Smart electrical panels, demand-side energy management systems, and battery storage solutions
-

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MADE ON DEMAND



Colorful approach. Green steel is becoming an alternative to high emission-releasing metals for construction. Production methods include the electric arc furnace, which uses scraps of steel and eliminates almost all greenhouse gas emissions. CREDIT: SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC

An international move towards decarbonization through green steel and hydrogen is well underway.

BY IDTECHEX

Sustainable technologies are generating a record amount of interest across many sectors. With the rising adoption of low-carbon hydrogen and its use for applications like green steel, as well as the development of other clean energy forms, new technologies are emerging to provide alternative materials for companies wanting to decarbonize.

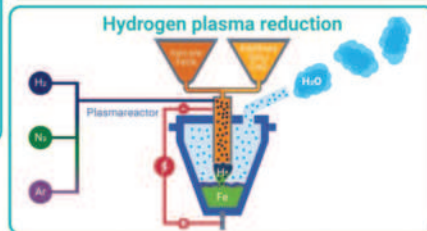
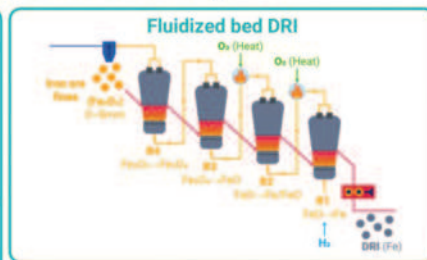
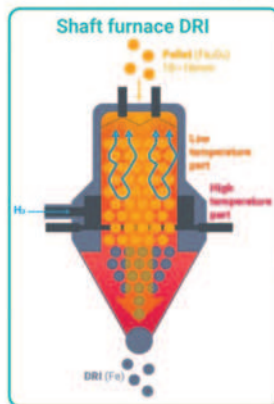
Growing populations and the exponentially increasing industrialization happening worldwide are contributing to the high demand for steel, which is

an industry known for high emissions. The increased need for data centers to keep up with AI developments, alongside renewable energy projects, are other factors driving this demand.

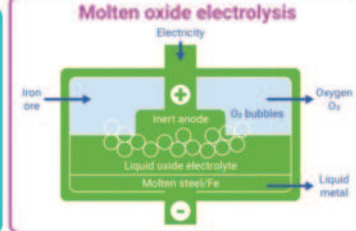
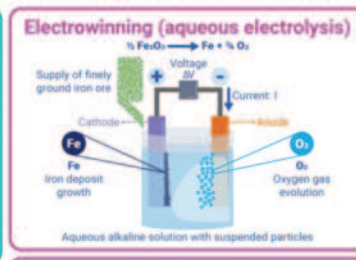
The trend of decarbonization has been longstanding, with clean energy being one of the leaders in the potential reduction of emissions. The development of green steel projects is welcome, though it will require international cooperation.

Green Ironmaking Technologies for Green Steel Production

Hydrogen-based ironmaking



Novel electrified ironmaking



Major development. Green steel can be produced through various ecofriendly processes, including plasma reduction and electrolysis.

SOURCE: IDTECHEX

A SELECTION OF CHOICES

The blast furnace is currently the most incumbent means of producing steel, though it is highly carbon intensive. This process produces approximately 2.3 tons of CO_2 per ton of crude steel, causing sustainability issues, and raising the need for stricter regulations and increased incentives for a number of countries, particularly within the European Union (EU).

The scrap electric arc furnace (EAF) approach is also very common in steel production, and is similar to a recycling process, where scraps of steel can be processed and reused. This method can be fully electrified, making it possible for renewable energy to be used instead of fossil fuels. This will decrease emissions close to zero, and result in the production of green steel.

Meanwhile, in the direct reduction of iron (DRI) method, which works alongside the EAF route, there is the potential for blue or green hydrogen to be used as a reducing agent, which would therefore also be a method for green steel production.

GREEN HYDROGEN AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO BATTERIES

Water electrolysis that uses renewable energy to split water into hydrogen and oxygen is the main method of producing green hydrogen, with an emission-free process. Companies that already use hydrogen as a key chemical feedstock are expected to uptake green hydrogen sooner than others over the next few years, due to existing infrastructure. Fertilizer and chemical manufacturers and refineries are the most likely to be able to make the change to green hydrogen with relatively small operational changes, paving the way for other potential green hydrogen users to follow.

Steel production and heavy transportation are likely to drive green hydrogen demand leading up to 2040, as well as other applications where batteries might not be the most well-suited energy source for efficiency reasons. Hydrogen fuel cells are gaining traction due to their short refueling times and long ranges when compared to batteries, with green hydrogen acting

as the best way to ensure zero emissions are produced in order to support sustainability claims.

Decarbonizing the power sector is another main driver for green hydrogen production, alongside large-scale renewable energy storage and aviation. These applications are likely to take flight between 2040 and 2050, with cost limitations currently acting as a barrier to adoption.

Water electrolyzer technology innovation is key to the success of the green hydrogen industry. While the manufacturing of electrolyzers is scaling up globally, component research and development and innovation will be key to improving the efficiency of hydrogen production and reducing reliance on critical minerals. Many component manufacturers recognize these key trends and are aligning their products with the needs of the green hydrogen industry.

THE MATERIALS BEHIND THE PROCESSES

Wind turbines, hydrogen tanks and solar panels are imperative in allowing for development of green energy technologies. Tidal power, automotives, and geothermal power are also covered in the report, with composite materials such as carbon fiber offering versatility and strength to a number of applications. But despite their usage in sustainable applications, the materials themselves can be difficult to decarbonize and require energy intensive processes to source.

For more information on the green energy sector and the materials involved in manufacturing, visit [IDTechEx's](#) portfolios of Energy & Decarbonization, and Sustainability Research Reports and Subscriptions. **GB**

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HOUSING 2.0



CREDIT: ISTOCK/METAMORWORKS

A BRAIN GAME

Get ready—Artificial Intelligence
is coming to housing.

BY SAM RASHKIN AND MONICA RASHKIN

This is Sam Rashkin's latest in a series of articles based on his second book, "Housing 2.0: A Disruption Survival Guide." It is intended as a roadmap for high-performance builders to become the most successful in the industry.

High-performance housing professionals view the “house as a system” of interdependent parts including building science control layers, mechanical systems and physical components. My book, [“Housing 2.0: A Disruption Survival Guide,”](#) expands this concept to “housing as a system” with a framework for optimizing five interdependent user experiences: community, design, performance, quality and sales. Thus, optimizing performance is critical, but not nearly enough. Success in today’s chaotic housing market requires builders to do much more.

Since publishing my book in 2021, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a major disruptor across all industries. Given this new reality, it’s time to broaden the Housing 2.0 framework to account for AI’s influence.

The AI applications we’re hearing about most in home construction lean toward automation and quality (e.g., digitization, optimizing materials, reducing waste, and streamlining supply chains). Yet there is a lesser-known AI application which is lighter touch and high reward. It is this less-familiar use case that we will explore today.

To that end, I enlisted the assistance of a trusted partner, my daughter, Monica Rashkin. This article bridges my housing experience and her background at the intersection of knowledge management and AI to demonstrate how the home construction industry can make smarter decisions to navigate today’s murky market conditions.

Initially we will look at a lighter touch AI process to enhance one of the five Housing 2.0 user experiences, the sales process. At the end, we will identify opportunities to apply AI to optimize the remaining four experiences. Whether you are already embracing AI or wary, it will lead to a Terminator-style takeover. I encourage you to buckle in and glimpse what is possible.

We’re not in Kansas anymore.



The paradox problem. Extensive homebuyer choices can lead to reduced purchases, or a greater focus on superficial product characteristics, increased difficulty committing to one option, and lower satisfaction with the final selections.

Now, instead of jam, consider the stakes of a six- or seven-figure home purchase. The weight of each decision becomes astronomically higher for most homebuyers. And when customization increases perceived risk, companies undermine the very value they sought to deliver.

HOUSING SALES AND THE “PARADOX OF CHOICE”

Most production home construction companies, to their own detriment, feel obligated to offer extensive homebuyer choices. However, this conflicts with a famous research study from 2000 that examines the impact of choice. This involved two groups of shoppers looking to purchase jam. One group was given 24 varieties and the other just six. To the astonishment of many, the shoppers with 24 varieties were far less likely to make a purchase than those given only six options.

A more recent study had similar findings: more choice leads to greater focus on superficial product characteristics, increased difficulty committing to one option, and lower satisfaction with the final selection.

The accepted explanation for this phenomenon is that less choice reduces burden on our cognitive resources. This concept has become known as the paradox of choice. “Paradox” being the operative word, because it seems counterintuitive that more choice leads to less satisfaction.

But, as mentioned earlier, the production home builders appear addicted to offering homebuyers excess choice. Walk into a new-home sales center on a busy weekend, and a familiar scene plays out repeatedly. Buyers arrive energized, eager to personalize a home to their lifestyle. Early conversations about layouts, efficiency, and features feel empowering. Then, decisions pile up: design options, upgrades, and technology choices accumulate quickly. What once felt like flexibility begins to feel like massive pressure. Buyer confidence fades, appointments run long, and momentum slows.

These outcomes are troubling for an industry already under stress from an epic affordability crisis. This is because excessive choice imposes significantly more business costs and negatively impacts sales by exhausting customers. Research shows a high variety of choice may attract initial interest, but when it comes to actual purchases, limiting options leads to greater confidence and follow-through. American auto companies learned this lesson when they were offering excessive options selling cars in the 1970s trying to be cost-competitive with foreign auto companies, making major inroads at that time with much more limited customer choice. Eventually, the American car companies followed suit and transitioned to simpler curated bundles of choices for each model car as used throughout the industry today.

Now, instead of jam, consider the stakes of a six- or seven-figure home purchase. The weight of each decision becomes astronomically higher for most homebuyers. And when customization increases perceived risk, companies undermine the very value they sought to deliver.



Product overload. Builders, homeowners and manufacturers can feel buried beneath the variety of green building choices available.

THE “SECRET” SALES FLOOR KNOWLEDGE

What makes the paradox of choice so striking for the housing industry is that it surprises almost no one closest to buyers. We are speaking, of course, about sales professionals. They can often predict when a buyer will stall based on the complexity and number of options presented. And in their arsenal of experience, they possess endless horror stories of homebuyer whiplash, couples erupting in intense fights, or buyers simply bursting into tears.

But the knowledge of these sales professionals extends far beyond anecdotes of dread. Their insights form clear patterns based on hundreds of homebuyer interactions. And, their wisdom offers a roadmap of what works, what overwhelms, and where buyer confidence breaks down.

WHY COMPANIES FAIL TO COURSE CORRECT

This begs the question: If sales professionals are already aware of the paradox of choice, by experience if not by name, then why don’t companies offer fewer options? The short answer is that the knowledge held by sales staff is largely tacit. Put another way, knowledge lives in their heads. Tacit knowledge is famously under-documented and often stored in scattered formats, including CRM records, call recordings, emails, hallway conversations, and wisdom from years of personal experience.

This dispersed expertise is not easily accessible or actionable. As a result, companies miss important trends that could help the sales process pivot from being reactive, addressing what buyers claim, to being proactive, tackling what actually drives buyer satisfaction. And until recently, extracting meaning from a large volume of inconsistent, unstructured information proved highly impractical. As a result, option sets grew more and more complex at new-home centers, sales cycles lengthened, and buyers continued feeling overwhelmed by choice.



Eyes on AI. AI-powered insights offer continuous improvement in creating a much smaller strategic set of options that still deliver a personalized home, as well as a shared understanding of what buyers actually need and will pay for.

FROM HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE TO COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Today, AI systems can effectively analyze large volumes of unstructured data. In doing so, they turn informal institutional knowledge into searchable insights. And enterprise-grade AI platforms can accomplish this while ensuring security. This means the results are restricted to a company's own data, with enterprise-grade protections keeping sensitive information private.

The “secret sauce” lies in maintaining the discipline to document what teams already know and treat knowledge as a strategic asset. As such, companies that prioritize capture of knowledge, stand to benefit most by unearthing what is actually happening beneath the surface.

So, what types of knowledge should be gathered? Internal data may include sales notes, call transcripts, surveys, or interviews. External sources may include market research, expert conversations, or relevant economic data. Uploaded altogether into a qualitative AI platform, these resources become a living knowledge repository—one that builds a far richer picture than any single dashboard ever could. This is because AI often identifies hidden patterns that get overlooked manually.

This process creates a continuous feedback loop where valuable insights from professionals, like sales staff, flow into AI systems. Then, AI provides outputs that sharpen leadership's understanding of trends, such as buyer behavior and market dynamics.

For example, by feeding high-quality inputs from sales teams, AI tools are expected to finally bring to the surface the paradox of choice that has plagued so many homebuyers over the years. More importantly, the AI tool can make insights actionable for leadership staff by offering data-informed

suggestions to counter homebuyer paralysis (e.g., how to guide homebuyers through a simplified, curated set of options).

Best of all, these same AI-powered insights can inform continuous improvement in many functional areas beyond sales. For instance, design teams can be better informed how to integrate bundled options that simplify buyer choice (instead of overwhelm); marketing teams learn how to create a perception of significant choice with a much smaller strategic set of options that still deliver a personalized home; and the organization as a whole moves toward a shared understanding of what their buyers actually need and will pay for.

WHERE HUMANS STILL MATTER MOST

While AI has many strengths, there are two critical areas where humans should never abdicate their responsibility to this technology.

First, humans must validate all the raw data. To attain high-quality outputs from an AI platform, humans must review inputs prior to any upload. They should check the content for accuracy, completion and credibility of sources. This is essential to prevent “garbage in, garbage out.” Ultimately, this step boosts confidence in AI-generated results and makes it easier to identify AI hallucinations.

Second, humans must own the decision-making process. AI excels at synthesis and pattern recognition, but it cannot replace human experience or judgment. People must interpret all AI-analyses and apply their unique expertise to optimize relevant strategies. For instance, builders should ask themselves why trends unearthed by AI exist and then decide how to respond within real-world constraints such as cost and brand considerations.



Human needs. AI cannot replace human experience or judgment. Builders should ask themselves why trends unearthed by AI exist and then decide how to respond within real-world constraints such as cost and brand considerations.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

While this article highlights the power of tapping into sales team knowledge, this is not the only group able to provide a full picture for home construction companies. Designers, operations staff, trades, consultants, and other employees each hold valuable insights that rarely get strategically collected or considered. But consider how much more effectively construction companies can respond to market demands when harnessing the wisdom of each of these decision-makers. Decisions become smarter in product selection, pricing, buyer education, and far beyond.

We suggest it is important to consider opportunities to apply a similar light touch AI process beyond sales to optimize Housing 2.0 user experiences:

- **Community:** Optimize plans to provide the most enduring value at the lowest cost (e.g., open spaces, amenities, planning concepts, governance that create the greatest property appreciation).
- **Design:** Optimize how each home lives at lowest cost (e.g., indoors,

outdoors, details with the highest willingness to pay compared to cost).

- **Performance:** Optimize compliance with above-code certification programs at lowest true cost (e.g., ENERGY STAR Certified Home, Indoor airPLUS, Efficient New Home, WaterSense, Fortified Home).
- **Quality:** Optimize a path to greater productivity that plans ahead for a shrinking and costlier workforce (e.g., advanced manufacturing options best aligned with preferred designs, targeted performance, risk tolerance, supply chain constraints, and site conditions).

Like it or not, AI is here. And for housing construction companies, let us suggest that sitting on the sidelines is not an option. This article offers a few practical strategies to get you in the game with AI-informed decision-making that is low cost and accountable to results.

Welcome to the future. It's time to take action. **GB**

Sam Rashkin's two-decade career as a licensed architect includes serving on national steering committees for the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)'s LEED for Homes, Green Builder Media's Green Builder Guidelines, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s WaterSense label, and EPA's Indoor AirPlus label. He has partnered with Green Builder Media to develop the [Housing 2.0 program](#), which empowers building professionals to design and construct higher-performance, healthier and more-sustainable homes at a fraction of the cost.

Monica Rashkin is a strategist with nearly 15 years of cross-sector experience. She is founder and CEO of [Bright Insights](#), which helps organizations turn complex data into actionable insights with AI-powered platforms. Before that, she led knowledge management at Habitat for Humanity's global innovation center, shaping how critical insights drive impact.

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For decades, the housing industry has focused on “cost per square foot,” but what if that metric is all wrong? We’ll zero in on the concept of “value per square foot,” and tell you why we think it’s a better way to build and sell.

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HOME. MORE THAN A HOUSE.

A quick search online of the term “emotional sustainability” renders: the capacity to maintain long-term psychological well-being. It involves self-awareness, managing emotional energy, setting boundaries, and fostering meaningful connections to avoid burnout and support enduring mental health.

Has the world ever been so chaotic, so uncertain? Have we ever been so universally divided and fearful of what comes next, what will be the crisis of the day? Was there ever a time when we were this distrustful of our institutions, of our leaders, of each other? Not in my lifetime.

People of my generation were fortunate to be born after the mass suffering of the Great Depression and the global insanity of World War II. It wasn't until the decade of the Sixties that we found ourselves in a world we could no longer explain. Marked by a series of shocking assassinations and defined by a foreign conflict that seemed to rip a fault line through our society, our country, we came to realize what it is like to lose all control.

It has been said that we only measure the things that we value and that we protect those things that we love. For most people, that begins with their family and the starting place for securing those priorities is their home. It is the first line of defense against the otherwise uncontrollable forces of the world, just beyond the front door. Literally and figuratively, it marks the boundary between confusion and clarity.

At Green Builder, we talk a great deal about sustainability and what that means, about affordability and how that should be defined. But somewhere, we have drifted away from the safe harbor that was symbolized by the home that we aspired to. Not just the building—the physical structure that offers protection and shelter—but perhaps more importantly, the refuge, the sanctuary that allows us to keep dreaming.

I believe that sustainability is the condition that exists when intergenerational prosperity is made possible through ecological accountability. That means we need to manage our

“Home ownership was once the cornerstone of the American dream. Sadly, the commoditization of houses, much like any other consumable product, has altered that reality.”

resources carefully and responsibly. It means that we meet our obligations with integrity and that we work toward the things that have lasting value rather than seeking instant gratification.

Similarly, when we speak of affordability, especially in the context of having a home of our own, it is necessary to look not just at our current circumstances, but to the far horizon. We struggle with the difference between acquisition and long-term possession. We attempt to draw the distinction between first cost and full cost. There is a marked difference between buying a house and owning a home, not just financially, but in the commitment to build family wealth and security with intention and patience.

Home ownership was once the cornerstone of the American dream. Sadly, the commoditization of houses, much like any other consumable product, has altered that reality. In today's world it seems that buying a house is not much different than purchasing a car, and we simply occupy it until it's time to trade it in for another one.

Abraham Lincoln is quoted as saying, “the strength of a nation lies in the homes of its people.” It refers to the foundation of security and prosperity necessary for nations and for families. I can't help wondering if the notion that a house, merely four walls and a roof, and lacking the emotional value that makes it a home, represents anything sustainable at all. **GB**



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