

California Green Builder Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Aren't there a lot of "green" programs out there? What's so special about California Green Builder?

A: Yes. Many are points-based, complicated and driven by outside groups. California Green Builder keeps the building industry in charge of the agenda, helps localities meet mandates in water and wood savings and waste diversion, and is voluntary. It includes independent third party inspections and diagnostic testing of energy features.

Q: Don't homes built under "green" program guidelines cost more to build?

A: Many green building techniques can be applied at little or no extra cost. Additionally, heating, cooling, and water use in green buildings often cost less so up-front costs to buyers can be offset in the long run.

Q: Isn't "green" building more complicated?

A: The requirements for CGB include building to exceed energy efficiency standards; diverting at least 50% of construction and jobsite waste; reducing water use by at least 20,000 gallons compared to contemporary "non green" homes; and include guidelines for efficient lumber and wood usage. Many builders are nearly meeting CGB standards without knowing it.

Q: Why should builders want to build under the CGB guidelines? What's in it for them?

A: Many builders are already building partially green, and there are many advantages. CGB builders may get fee deferrals and enhance their opportunity to build or achieve higher densities. CGB offers marketing support, sponsorship support, certificates, and possible recognition from elected officials. CGB is a great opportunity for builders to be perceived as even more socially responsible stewards of the environment. Additionally, CGB quantifies energy and resource savings that CGB builders can use as a selling tool.

Q: Isn't it true that consumers aren't concerned with building "green"?

A: No, recent studies have shown that many homebuyers want green homes. People want lower ozone-depleting gas emissions, sustainable forests, and less landfill waste. Builders report that "green" homebuyers have higher satisfaction, knowing they have done something good for the environment.

Q: What kind of research do you have that backs up your claims that "green" homes really help the environment?

A: CGB was conceived and created by The Building Industry Institute (BII), the research arm of the California Building Industry Association (CBIA). The BII continues to research and monitor crucial elements of green building techniques and make that data available to CGB program builders. The BII also conducted extensive literature research to verify and quantify the benefits for incorporated measures.





Q: How does building “green” improve the environment?

- CGB Homes use 15-20 percent less energy than homes built to California’s exacting Title-24 requirements. It is estimated that for every 100 CGB homes save on average 70 therms of gas and 700 kWh, resulting in saving 137,100 lbs of CO₂.
- CGB homes reduce water usage by at least 20,000 gallons/year compared to contemporary "non-green" homes. Additionally, water delivery and treatment costs are reduced by building green, benefiting the public. Homeowners pay reduced water bills.
- During construction, builders divert at least 50 percent, sometimes as much as 80 percent of their on-site construction wastes. This reduces landfill consumption and helps create new uses for second-hand products.
- CGB homes have better indoor air quality because of advanced HVAC designs, MERV filters and increased use of low VOC materials.
- Four credible, sustainable forest certifiers are included in CGB, including the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), the Canadian Standards Association’s Sustainable Forest Management System Standards (CAN/CSA), and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Other sustainable forest certifiers may be included when warranted.

Q: What is a California Green Builder home, exactly? What are the requirements?

Higher Energy Efficiency Standards

CGB homes are designed and built to exceed California’s stringent Title 24 energy efficiency standards by at least 15%. CGB homes will feature:

- Improved insulation installation
- Engineered HVAC systems
- Tight HVAC Ducts
- High-efficiency glazing (SHGC and U-value < 0.40)
- Independent third-party inspections and diagnostics of energy features

Water Resource Conservation

CGB homes use at least 20,000 gallons less water than similar, newly constructed “non green” homes by featuring:

- Innovative plumbing systems and fixtures such as
 - Parallel hot water piping; or
 - Hot water recirculation system
 - Ultra-low flow toilet(s) (= 1.28 gpf)
 - High-efficiency clothes washer as a buyer option (water factor ≤ 6.0)
- New designs for landscaping and irrigation such as



- Weather-based irrigation controllers that provide only the amount of water required to sustain the landscaping (Smart Controller)
- Front yard landscaping with a maximum of 75% turf, drought tolerant plants, and a high-efficiency drip irrigation system

OR

- Enrollment in the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's *California Friendly* water conservation program. For more information, visit www.bewaterwise.com. (Rebates may be applicable to MWD customers only. Other water districts may offer similar rebates and programs)

Wood Conservation

Certified wood products that come from forests overseen by SFI, ATFS: CAN/CSA or will qualify under CGB.

Improved Indoor Air Quality

CGB Requires ACCA design protocols be used to ensure comfort and adequate ventilation. In addition, Minimum Efficiency Reporting Values (MERV) 6 filters and use of low/no Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) help improve indoor air quality.

Waste Diversion

CGB requires that at least 50% of on-site construction waste be diverted from landfills. This helps communities meet their AB 939 mandates.

Q: Don't "green" homes look like something out of the Flintstones? What creature comforts do I have to give up to live "green"?

A: No, CGB homes look and feel just like traditional homes, except they use less energy, help power plants to emit fewer greenhouse gases, conserve water and wood, send less solid waste to landfills, provide better indoor air quality, and save homebuyers money on energy and water bills.



The Benefits

The California Green Builder program is a true win-win program. It was conceived to encourage partnerships between builders and local governments to build cost-effective, green homes that benefit homebuyers and the community at large. Builders who embrace CGB differentiate themselves in the marketplace through resource efficiency. Builders may also be rewarded with jurisdictional benefits that are often provided by CGB. The turn-key implementation with documentable savings is a plus for local officials. The California Green Builder homebuyers benefit now and in years to come from the features that are provided by CGB.

Builder Benefits

CGB is consistent throughout California

- Local jurisdictions may provide:
 - Recognition, improved plan check, and/or lower fees
 - Advantages in the entitlement process
- CGB Provides:
 - Point of purchase marketing support
 - Green Builder brochure
 - Recognition plaque
 - Product differentiation
 - Local recognition via press releases
 - Recognition in California Builder Magazine
 - California Energy Code training
 - Annual CBIA Golden Nugget Award Competition for California Green Builders

Website identifying California Green Builder Communities

Homeowner Benefits

Studies show that homebuyers think building green is the way of the future. Homeowners want less impact on the environment, lower energy bills, and cleaner air. They find that after moving into their new, CGB homes that reduced utility bills provide long-term savings, and find their homes require less maintenance.

Buying a CGB home:

- Produces a feeling of satisfaction at having done something good for the environment
- Improves indoor comfort level, reducing dust, pollen, and other pollutants
- Saves money on utility bills over the life of the home
- Helps conserve precious natural resources, such as wood and water
- Helps lessen the impact on local landfills

FOR MORE DETAIL PLEASE VISIT: <http://www.cagreenbuilder.com/>





Building Industry Institute
CGB-CP
California Green Builder Certification Process

1. A builder submits the completed California Green Builder (CGB) Application to the program director with required attachments and \$400 application fee (payable to The Building Industry Institute) for each subdivision seeking CGB certification to:

California Green Builder
Attn: CGB Program Coordinator
7407 Tam O'Shanter Drive
Stockton, CA 95210
(866) 340-8912
2. The CGB program director reviews submitted materials for accuracy and verifies compliance with CGB requirements. Upon approval BII shall designate the project as CGB pending final inspections of the subdivision(s). The time for preliminary application review shall not exceed three weeks once all material has been received. After reviewing project documentation, Builder is entitled to use the California Green Builder Logo and to designate the project as a California Green Builder subdivision or community.
3. The CGB certified inspector¹ shall inspect the first unit of each floor plan within 2 working days of receiving an inspection request from the Builder. The Inspector shall transmit inspection results to the HERS Provider within 24 hours of completing each inspection. The HERS Provider shall deliver completed CF-4R and CGB-RVF forms to the Builder and copies to the CGB Director within 2 working days of receiving inspection results from the Inspector. After BII reviews and approves the CF-4R and CGB-RVF, BII shall timely issue California Green Builder Project Certificate (The Certificate, hereafter.).
4. If Builder changes features that affect CGB compliance, Builder shall immediately notify BII. The Builder shall timely provide verification that the subdivision, as modified, complies with the CGB requirements.
5. CGB certified inspectors shall provide final inspection results to Builder and to BII during build-out to verify project compliance with CGB requirements.
6. BII shall randomly inspect homes to ensure that CGB Requirements have been met.
7. Once certified, fees for participation in the California Green Builder program will be \$50 per lot. This fee applies to all new contracts in the CA Green Builder program after January 1, 2007.

These fees apply to subdivisions certified for the California Green Builder program after September 1, 2007. These fees do not include the cost of CGB-required third party inspections.

¹ CGB certified inspector is a HERS Rater with additional CGB Training. CGB certified inspectors are independent third party contractors that must be retained and paid by CGB builders independent of CGB's certification fees.