



INCORPORATING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES INTO YOUR LIFE

Consider the sustainability (entire lifecycle) of a product before you purchase it. Where was it made? Did the company use eco friendly processes in its creation (such as using recycled water, solar power or biofuel in the factory)? What are the transportation costs to get it to the final destination? What can be done to keep the product out of the landfill after its useful life? Is the product biodegradable or can it be re-used/recycled?

- Encourage the use of drought resistant plants and landscaping to reduce water consumption. Investigate the legality of grey water catchment systems and the use of grey water for landscaping in your city.
- Avoid replacing asphalt shingles with the same product and thereby clogging landfills. Consider concrete tiles for roofing with a lifetime warranty.
- When you are replacing asbestos insulation, consider biodegradable alternatives (denim, cellulose).
- When you are remodeling ask the contractor to de-construct the jobsite rather than demolishing it. Re-purpose the cabinets for garage storage or deliver them to a salvage company for a tax write-off.
- Don't use or hand out individual water bottles at your parties or meetings. Our landfills are clogged with these. American use thousands of barrels of oil everyday just to make the plastic for these one time use containers.
- Know the options for recycled components in countertops, tile and flooring.
- Use paints that don't release volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
- Take advantage of tax credits and rebates by buying energy efficient Energy Star products. Contact your utility companies to see which heating, cooling, plumbing and lighting products qualify for rebates. Check with
- your accountant to see which home improvements qualify for federal energy tax credits.

To view other green building options
call Jean Cary at: 650-593-9622 or
email: jeancary@earthlink.net