

# What is Sustainability in Design and Building?

**It means different things to different people depending on one's beliefs, what one cares about, one's priorities, one's affordability.**

How can you be environmentally responsible while designing your new house or addition?

The following is a checklist to consider:

*(adapted from Environmental Building News)*

## DESIGN

- **Smaller is better**
- Design an **energy efficient** building
- Design to use **renewable energy**
- **Optimize** material use
- Design **water-efficient, low maintenance** landscaping
- Make it easy to recycle waste
- Gray water use
- Design for durability
- Design for future reuse and adaptability

## LAND USE & SITE ISSUES

- **Renovate** older buildings
- Create community
- Value site resources
- Locate building to minimize impact
- Provide responsible on-site water management
- Situate buildings to benefit from existing vegetation
- Protect trees and topsoil during site work
- Avoid use of pesticides and other chemicals that may leach into the groundwater

## MATERIALS

- Use **durable** products and materials
- Choose **low maintenance** building materials
- Choose building materials with **low embodied energy**
- **Buy locally produced** material
- Use building products made from **recycled materials**
- Use **salvaged materials** when possible
- Seek **responsible wood supplies**
- Avoid materials that will off-gas pollutants
- Minimize use of pressure-treated lumber
- Minimize packaging waste

## EQUIPMENT

- Install high-efficiency heating and cooling equipment
- Avoid ozone-depleting chemicals in mechanical equipment and insulation
- Install high-efficiency lights and appliances
- Install water-efficient equipment
- Install mechanical ventilation equipment

**Sustainability by choice.**

**Sustainability by habit.**

**Sustainability as a lifestyle.**

**Sustainability  
for our children's future.**