

Green Home Building: America vs. Europe

Every day, it seems like citizens and governments all over the world are becoming increasingly aware of the need to conserve. And even though the United States is doing more every day to conserve energy, Americans are still a step behind in the energy conservation movement. Europe in particular has been leading the way in green home building and especially in energy conservation for many years.

European Energy Consciousness

European countries lead the pack when it comes to green home design and green living... which makes a certain amount of sense. Because on the continent, gasoline, natural gases, and energy costs significantly more than it does in America, and it has been that way for many years. And of course this makes Europe more aware of energy and power usage than the U.S.. This is seen in European culture in a lot of ways.

A big thing that separates Europe from the U.S. in energy conservation is a massive network of railroads and other forms of public transport. Almost every major city in Europe has an efficient public transport system (with underground trains, overground trains, buses, trams, etc.) that is well patronized by residents. And even though there are plenty of individually owned vehicles in European countries, most cities in Europe boast a higher percentage of mass transit users (and bicycle riders) than the United States.

Europeans also build their homes with energy conservation in mind. In large European cities in particular, green home building concepts are widely used. Most people residing in a large European city live in a much smaller space than the average U.S. home. Most homes (and many businesses) in Europe do not have central air conditioning, and use basic green home building concepts for cooling. These include roll down screens, patio shading, double windows, and more. The Green Home Building Trend in the U.S.

Essentially, Europeans have been remembering to turn the lights out when they leave a room for years. In the U.S., people are just getting used to not seeing energy as something that will always be inexpensive and easily available, and are slowly developing a better instinct for conservation. This changing mindset is evidenced by the increasing popularity of green home building.

Green home building and design uses concepts, such as smaller home size, basic insulation, and position to the sun to conserve energy, as well as alternative energy technology (such as solar power) to provide power to homes. More long term, in depth ideas are also used in green home building in America, such as using renewable materials and environmentally friendly building processes. America is a little behind, but with luck will start catching up to the standard set by Europe.

About the Author

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