

## Green Building For Your Garage?

In our quest for building green, the humble garage is almost always forgotten. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has found that an attached garage creates a large amount of in-house pollution and affects the health of the occupants. This happens because the interface between the house and the garage is not properly designed reducing the indoor quality of air. Thus, you may have all the green features incorporated in the house, but if you neglect the garage, those green features come to naught.

The single largest contributor is the noxious exhaust generated by the car which enters the house through doors and cracks in the garage walls. Low formaldehyde sealing agents are the answer to seal the cracks in the garage wall and the door leading to the house to tackle air pollution. Garages have other materials that give off toxic fumes. The list includes turpentine oil, benzene used by lawn mowers, cleaning agents, and pesticides used for gardening. Investing in a garage exhaust fan that can suck out noxious air is a good option.

An innovative green design which will help in improving the overall green quality of your house is installation of a green garage roof. Grass, plants or other vegetation can help cover green roofs. Many companies in the US offer this service of building a green roof. In a green roof building process, an environmentally friendly water proofing material called Thermoplastic Polyolefin (TPO) forms the first layer. Then layers for water retention and filters are put. Over these layers, the growing medium, a custom made mixture of light weight soil and rock which supports plant life is laid. Plants with shallow roots, which are drought resistant, are then planted in this medium. The environmental advantages of a green roof are many. Green roofs help reduce noise pollution, filter rainwater and reduce the cost of cooling your house. Plant respiration helps reduce heat in the surrounding areas. Since plants absorb sunlight; they prevent the heat from being absorbed by the rooftop thus increasing its life. According to a recent study, a green roofed garage can produce enough oxygen for 25 people and also remove eight kg of pollutants annually. A green thatched garage not only improves aesthetics but also attracts birds, which increases the biodiversity of your area.

### About the Author

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