green by the numbers

Our 2008 Green Building Survey reveals the power of green in residential building. Here are the topline results you can use to fine-tune your green commitment

Green building continues to grow as the nation wises up to the need to change how we use our limited resources. Every day, the mainstream media showcases breathtaking green houses and technologies on the cusp of adoption, such as retooled garages with plugs for cars, wind communities, and revolutionary materials that will change how houses are built.

While that coverage serves a great purpose in keeping green top of mind for buyers, it's always prudent to assess hard facts: Where does green building stand today and how are builders doing who have embraced its tenets?

In this collection of infographics, we give you a snapshot of sustainable building in 2008. The survey, which we did in concert with Reed Business Information, records the responses of builders, architects, engineers, and other building professionals to see what green looks like from their perspective.

It doesn't make sense to build green if you aren't going to point it out to prospective buyers. Nearly three-quarters of respondents market some or all of their homes as green.

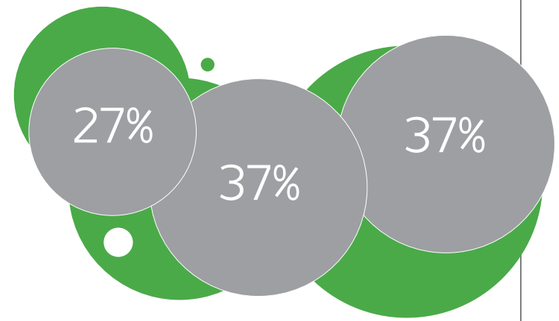
1. Builders Brag About Green

Do you market your homes as green?

Yes, all houses built are marketed as green_____ **37%**

Yes, some houses built are marketed as green _____ **37%**

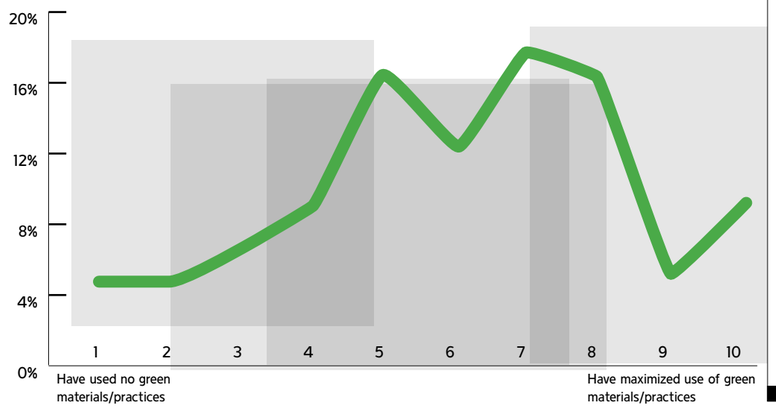
No, we do not market houses as green_____ **27%**



More than half of respondents (58%) rated themselves in the middle—at 4, 5, 6, or 7—on a scale of 1 to 10, while 11% said they have maximized the use of green.

2. Growing in Numbers

These builders rated the houses built, designed, or engineered by their firms on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "have used no green materials/practices, and 10 being "have maximized use of green materials/practices.

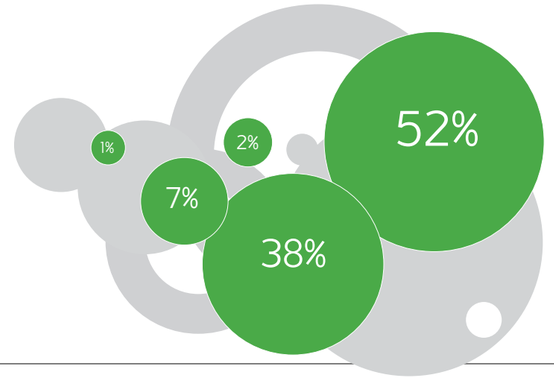


Nine of ten respondents say green features are somewhat/extremely important when selecting building products.

3. Asked For By Name

How important are green building features to you when you select building products?

Extremely important	**52%**
Somewhat important	**38%**
Neither important nor unimportant	**7%**
Somewhat unimportant	**1%**
Not at all important	**2%**

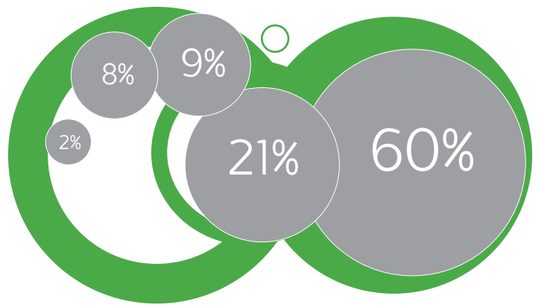


Approximately seven of 10 respondents reject the idea that green is a fad.

4. Here to Stay

Is green building a fad?

Strongly agree	**2%**
Somewhat agree	**8%**
Neither agree nor disagree	**9%**
Somewhat disagree	**21%**
Strongly disagree	**60%**

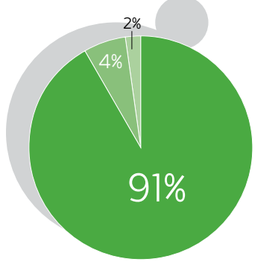


Builders expect to be held accountable for the "greenness" of their homes; the majority think an independent third party is the best choice for ensuring green compliance.

5. Higher Standards?

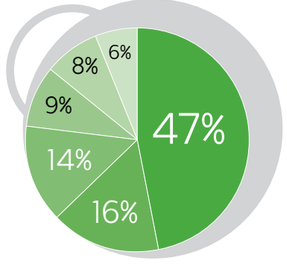
Should there be minimum standards of performance and sustainability before a builder can market a home as green?

Yes	**91%**
No	**2%**
Not sure	**6%**



Who should set the standards?

Independent, third-party program	**47%**
Federal government	**16%**
Trade association	**14%**
State government	**8%**
Local government	**6%**
Other	**9%**



The top green features that builders put in all their homes are energy-efficient windows, energy-efficient appliances, high-efficiency HVAC systems, and enhanced insulation.

6. Green Features

How many of the houses built, designed, or engineered by your company over the past 12 months include these green features?

	ALL	MOST	SOME	NONE	NOT SURE
Energy-efficient windows	54%	19%	6%	11%	10%
Energy-efficient appliances	42%	24%	10%	11%	13%
High-efficiency HVAC system	40%	21%	12%	11%	16%
Enhanced insulation	39%	21%	14%	12%	13%
Water-saving plumbing fixtures and fittings	35%	20%	17%	13%	14%
Moisture-management products and methods	35%	19%	14%	16%	17%
Energy-efficient lighting	28%	28%	20%	11%	13%
Air-sealing package to reduce infiltration	34%	17%	16%	16%	16%
Improved indoor air ventilation	28%	23%	16%	16%	17%
Construction waste reduction	26%	20%	22%	15%	17%

More than half of respondents cited higher costs and confusion surrounding the various green programs and standards as stumbling blocks to green adoption.

7. Obstacle Course

In what ways, if any, are typical building processes disrupted when implementing green building techniques?

Confusion with different "green" standards	**59%**
Costs increase	**57%**
Need to educate municipalities about energy efficient products or construction techniques	**47%**
Takes longer to source products	**45%**
Takes longer to spec products	**38%**
Takes longer to find product replacements if original order is incorrect or late	**28%**
Downtime spent waiting for inspectors/certifications	**25%**
We need to use specialty subs who are not familiar with our company/processes	**24%**
Takes longer to receive municipal approvals	**15%**
Takes longer to build home	**13%**
Other	**8%**
Typical building processes are not disrupted by green building techniques	**14%**

Nearly all respondents (95%) say their staff members are receptive to green training. They typically get that training in house and/or through webinars.

8. All Aboard?

How receptive or resistant to training in green building techniques is your staff?

Very receptive
61%

Somewhat receptive
34%

Somewhat resistant
4%

Very resistant
1%

How do you train your staff in green building techniques?

In-house training
64%

Seminars/conferences
57%

Webinars
27%

Other
11%

No training in green building techniques
11%

Seven of 10 respondents think Energy Star is simple to implement. NAHB comes in second, trumping LEED for ease of use.

9. Following the Rules

How easy to use are existing green program?

	VERY OR SOMEWHAT EASY TO USE	SOMEWHAT TO VERY DIFFICULT
NAHB	43%	13%
LEED	27%	43%
Energy Star	69%	11%
Manufacturer programs	41%	12%
Utility companies	41%	18%
Local or state programs such as EarthCraft, Austin Green Building	27%	16%