

DALLAS/FORT WORTH

house & home

THE COMPLETE RESOURCE MAGAZINE FOR YOUR HOME

APRIL 2010



THE GREEN ISSUE

WHY GREEN MAKES SENSE

A LOCAL BUILDER DEBUTS AN INNOVATIVE, COST-EFFECTIVE HOME THAT'S BUILT TO HANDLE WEATHER EXTREMES BEAUTIFULLY

COOL POOLS | EARTH FRIENDLY FLOORS | WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



WITH AN EXPANDING VARIETY OF ECO-FRIENDLY CHOICES, HOMEOWNERS FIND IT'S EASY GOING GREEN. FROM WOOD, CORK AND BAMBOO TO TILE – EVEN CARPET – THE DESIGN OPTIONS ARE ALMOST UNLIMITED.

GREEN FLOORING

“Sustainable,” “eco-friendly” and “green” talk are more and more common in home design and construction these days. And it’s about time.

One way to walk the “green” walk, is to stop and notice what you’re walking on. Flooring is central to an environmentally friendly home because it covers, well, every square inch of it. It’s also an aspect of the home that can go green without major renovation or sky-high prices.

Beautiful bamboo is a solid and sustainable choice, because it grows rapidly and can be harvested more frequently than traditional wood sources.

“We’ve definitely seen a huge increase (in requests for green material) just in the last year,” says Paige Haynes, gallery manager at Daltile. “Consumers are being much more aware of the environment and their footprint. They are asking questions about products made from recycled materials, LEED (an internationally recognized green building) certification, and even where things are made. Mileage cuts down on the footprint.”

The demand for sustainable materials has certainly increased in the last few years, and the market is starting to match the demand with a versatile, approachable supply. Green options are available for almost any flooring type, from hardwood to carpet to tile. How green you go really depends on flexibility – in both budget and aesthetic.

“Unfortunately, the true green products are very expensive,” said Harry Schillings, owner of Spring Carpets.

But many green choices, like economically sound tile, are both affordable and beautiful.

“Consumers are being much more aware of the environment and their footprint. They are asking questions about products made from recycled materials, LEED (an internationally recognized green building) certification, and even where things are made. Mileage cuts down on the footprint.” —Paige Haynes of Daltile

HARDWOOD

The hardwood aesthetic probably offers the widest spectrum of ecologically sound products, however, only a few of them are actually wood.

BAMBOO: A rapidly renewable resource, bamboo is one of the most popular flooring options for the environmentally aware. The plant can be cut down about every six years, and then, it grows back from the same root stock, says Ann Knight, global brand director and executive vice president of Teragren, the nation’s leading manufacturer of environmentally conscious bamboo flooring, countertops, panels and veneer.

“(Our bamboo) is grown without pesticides so there is nothing in the growing process that harms the earth.”

Bamboo releases 35 percent more oxygen and absorbs about four times more carbon than a comparable cluster of trees. To underscore this point, Teragren lists on every product box how much carbon that bamboo removed from the earth.

Stressing the increased demand for green products, Knight says that bamboo accounts for 60 percent of Teragren’s flooring sales. Manufacturers of bamboo floors now offer many more options in grain and color, so it appeals to all home styles.

CORK: This material is growing in popularity but remains fairly expensive. Cork is strictly protected in the limited areas of the world where it grows from the Cork Oak, and it is also a rapidly renewable resource. Schillings covered his office floor in cork three years ago, and due to its comfort, unusual look and durability, he said, the cost – about twice as much as some hardwoods – was certainly worth it.