

# What is a Green Home?

Energy efficiency, health, and comfort all are hallmarks of a green house. Such properties often are called **high performance, eco-friendly, or energy efficient homes.**

## Common elements

Though some homes are certified as green by housing or environmental industry groups, properties don't necessarily have to carry a label to be considered green.

Such houses often include systems and features that lower utility bills, improve health and comfort, and minimize the impact on the environment.

## Green upgrades

For existing homes, there are numerous ways to achieve greater efficiency.

They include small, inexpensive upgrades like installing low-flow water faucets, energy-efficient light bulbs, and programmable thermostats.

In addition, less visible elements, including efficient insulation and air sealing, create a more comfortable environment.

More substantial upgrades — high-efficiency furnaces, solar panels, and triple-pane windows, for example — often provide greater comfort to occupants and long-term savings and environmental benefits.

## New homes

Newly constructed homes are being built to high standards that embrace green principles. They may incorporate recycled or non-toxic products and materials that require less energy to produce.

In addition, many builders now take a scientific, whole-building approach to ensure that a property's design, layout, and systems work together to create a functional, comfortable home that addresses environmental concerns. Many such homes also carry third-party home certifications.

## Seeking green

When you're shopping for homes, look for:

- Energy efficient features, such as appliances, water fixtures, lighting, heating, cooling, and water heating systems.
- Efficient building envelopes with high-performance windows and well insulated walls, floors, and attics.
- Non-toxic building materials and finishes, including recycled or renewable woods and low- and zero-VOC (volatile organic compound) paints and sealants.
- A landscape featuring native plants and grasses that thrive without chemicals or excessive watering.
- Location efficiency, meaning a community that's walkable and has accessible public transportation so you can manage daily needs without a car.

## Learn more

Contact a REALTOR® with NAR's Green Designation at [www.green.realtor](http://www.green.realtor).

Read about green home labels at ENERGY STAR®, [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

National Association of Homebuilders, [nahb.org](http://nahb.org).  
US Green Building Council, [usgbc.org](http://usgbc.org).

## Victoria Gulsvig

Windermere Real Estate  
22017 SE Wax Road, #102  
Maple Valley, WA 98038  
[www.vgulsvig.withwre.com](http://www.vgulsvig.withwre.com)  
206-818-8038  
[vgulsvig@windermere.com](mailto:vgulsvig@windermere.com)



REALTORS® who have earned NAR's Green Designation can refer you to local experts who can assess your home's performance. Learn more at [www.green.realtor](http://www.green.realtor).

