

Going Green: Hyde Park interior designer provides solutions

Hyde Park designer Amy Schuermann wasn't working on any LEED certified homes when she opened her doors of her own firm, Amy Schuermann Interiors, in the spring of 2009. However, the push towards greener design - or LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings - is dramatically changing the way architects, builders and designers like Amy serve their clients. In fact, Hyde Park residents and builders are making drastic changes to go green.

Outside, they are replacing old roofing with solar panels and now, on the inside, they are calling on interior designers, like Amy, to incorporate items such as bamboo flooring and more efficient water faucets, counter tops made of recycled materials and 100% natural paint containing no VOCs (volatile organic compounds).

Initially more a commercial movement (with companies looking to go green by saving money with energy efficient buildings in addition to receiving incentive tax credits), LEED certified new home construction and renovation can be seen all over Cincinnati.

As a designer, Amy is always staying ahead of the latest trends and has vast knowledge of LEED design, which she has gained through research for her most recent project, a future LEED Platinum home in Cincinnati.

"I pride myself on coming up with a customized plan and look for each individual client, whether it is sustainable designs or traditional to more modern furnishings. Working with my clients closely, listening to their tastes and needs to accomplish their dream space is my goal."

The 6,700 sq ft LEED Platinum home is being built by Hyde Park residents Terry and Kate Rath.

Randy Travis, of RLT Design, created the East Coast Shingle style home, skillfully integrated into a 2.4. acre undeveloped infill site. The traditional home will be

equipped with PV Solar Panels for the interior heating, geothermal heating for the pool, Energy Star high efficiency windows, recycled insulation, energy efficient appliances and lighting, slow-flow faucets and high efficiency toilets... not to mention other green-oriented materials. Once Amy has worked with the Raths on the LEED oriented interior selections, she then will assist them with finishing items such as furniture, window treatments, artwork and accessories.

So how can you make your home's interior greener if you are not necessarily building new? Here are some helpful tips Amy:

Recycled Counter Tops: Looking to replace or update your counter tops any time soon? Consider options such as "Ice Stone," which is 85% recycled glass content with concrete. Ice Stone comes in a variety of colors and has an interesting 3 dimensional look. Cost: \$60-85 sq. ft. Installed. Another option: "Paper Stone" made from post-consumer waste, recycled paper and petroleum-free phenolic resins.



Amy Schuermann of Amy Schuermann Interiors stands on the lot of the future LEED home being built in Hyde Park

Has a smoother, textural look and comes in neutral, darker colors. Cost: \$80-85 sq. ft installed. Source: Greener Stock, Columbia-Tusculum, 321-0567

Lighting: You can replace your older incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs that use about a quarter of the energy, last many times longer and pay for themselves after about 500 hours of use. CFLs now come in a variety of shapes and sizes, including candelabra bulbs. Note: you do need a compatible dimmer if you

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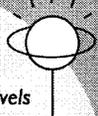
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Green—continued from page 29
 want to dim these bulbs.

LEDs (light emitting diodes) are a
 newer bulb technology lasting even longer
 than CFLs. While they cost quite a bit
 more than CFLs, they last 10 times longer
 and can reduce energy consumption by
 80-90%. Sources: Richard's Electric:
 242-8800. Ellen Hall with Green Irene:
 932-7304.

Flooring: For hardwood there are
 several green options. Reclaimed wood
 from old barns that are simply remilled
 and refinished to look like new is a great
 option. FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)
 Wood is wood harvested from forests
 responsibly, environmentally managed
 and certified by the FSC. You can go
 even greener by sourcing standard or
 FSC wood within a 500-mile radius of
 your home site. An even more sustain-
 able alternative to traditional hardwood
 is bamboo, a rapidly renewable product
 (regrowing its stalk 8 times quicker than
 most trees) and is even harder than tra-
 ditional white oak. Source: Contact an
 interior designer or any earth-friendly
 hardwood floor company.

Cork is another flooring option that
 is harvested as bark from rapidly renew-
 ing living cork oak trees. Cork comes in
 a variety of fun colors and is great option
 for playrooms and more contemporary

spaces. Cork can also come in a recycled
 rubber combination, not to mention 100%
 recycled rubber is a great option for laun-
 dry or workout rooms and other industrial
 use spaces. Marmoleum brand is a hard
 solid surface flooring system that comes in
 planks and squares. It is made primarily
 from renewable resources, including lin-
 seed oil, wood flour and pine rosin. Like
 cork, it's easy to install, comes in a range
 of colors and can be designed in to a fun
 and interesting pattern. Source: Greener
 Stock, Columbia-Tusculum 321-0567

Carpet: Go with recycled nylon or wool
 which is a rapidly renewable resource.

Plumbing:

High Efficiency Toilets: With 50% of
 all toilets in U.S. homes being older, less
 efficient models, High-Efficiency Toilets
 (HET) save up to 16,500 gallons of water
 in the U.S. a year. Replacing your old toi-
 let with a 1.28 gallons per flush (gpf) or a
 dual flush toilet (1.6/0.8 gpf) will save you
 money over the 3.5 gpf toilet you probably
 already have.

Slow Flow Faucets. WaterSense Kohler
 faucets, for example, have a 1.5 gpm (gal-
 lons per minute) offer a 45% savings an-
 nually over older, 2.75 gpm.

Showerheads and Hand showers:
 Same idea as the Slow Flow Faucets but
 a gfm of 1.75 vs. older 2.75 showerheads.
 This can result in an annual water savings

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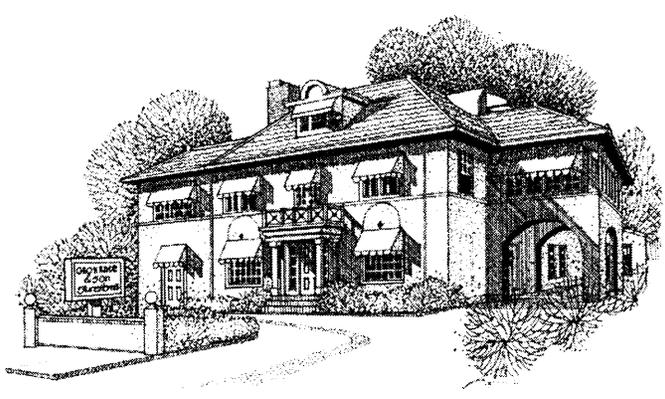
John H.
1920



J.H. (Don)
1948



Steve
1975



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