Green Building Starts Here

Level 1 Homeowners Manual
Dear Home Owner,

Congratulations on your new green home! Your builder has made sure that your home has been built to a high quality standard using conservation strategies and considering your indoor air quality. Your home has been certified through our Build San Antonio Green® program as a Level 2 home. This means that your home is at least 15% more efficient than an average new home in San Antonio.

Please read through this manual to learn about some of the many attributes of your new home that make it energy efficient, water efficient, and cost efficient to operate and maintain. Being able to know more about what makes this certified as a Build San Antonio Green® home will help you realize the benefits of owning this house for years to come.

As with owning a car, owning a home requires some knowledge of how its components work, and knowing when and how to provide proper maintenance to keep those components working well. Because of this, we recommend keeping a folder of owner’s manuals, warranties, receipts, operating instructions, maintenance schedules and maintenance records along with this Homeowner’s Manual. Keep this Homeowner’s Manual in a safe and easy to find place for easy access.

Please contact Build San Antonio Green® at (210) 224-7278 if you would like to learn more about the green features of your home or about our green building programs.

Thank you,

Anita Ledbetter
Executive Director

Build San Antonio Green®
ENERGY STAR® for Homes Rating

Your home has been ENERGY STAR® certified. ENERGY STAR® for Homes is a voluntary certification program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy that provides certification of homes that are energy efficient. When a home is built under the ENERGY STAR® standards it additionally includes other energy-saving features that on average make it 20–30% more efficient than standard homes. All builder-installed equipment in your new home has the ENERGY STAR® label for all appliances and products that are recognized by the ENERGY STAR® program. The qualified equipment in your home includes: refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers, dehumidifiers, ceiling fans, and room air conditioners. There are over 50 categories of products that are eligible to earn the ENERGY STAR®. However, not all appliances are considered by the program. For example, as of this writing, there are no clothes dryers that have earned the ENERGY STAR®. The complete list of qualified products can be found on the ENERGY STAR® website (see the link below).

Tip: As your home ages, remember to replace appliances such as refrigerators, televisions, dishwashers, washing machines, light bulbs, etc., with other ENERGY STAR® qualified products. ENERGY STAR® products will lower your household energy consumption.

To find out more about ENERGY STAR®, refer to their website: www.energystar.gov

When you see the ENERGY STAR® label, remember:

- The product exceeds minimum federal standards for energy consumption.
- It’s in one of the over 50 categories of products rated.
- For more products to keep your home green, see www.energystar.gov.
The heating, ventilation and air conditioning system in your home also has a higher SEER rating than required by code. The SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) is a method of evaluating the efficiency of air conditioners. The higher number indicates less energy is required to cool the house to the same comfort level of house with an air conditioner with a lower SEER rating. The system in your home has a SEER rating of at least 15, which is highly efficient for a region area.

A similar rating system exists for heating called the AFUE (Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency), which is based on ASHRAE standard 90.1. Your heating system has at least a 80 AFUE. If your house features an Air-Source Heat Pump, the system has a HSPF (Heating Seasonal Performance Factor) of at least 8.5. These energy efficiency factors on your systems simply mean that your house got equipped with very efficient systems for our climate zone which will result in a more energy efficient home overall.

A comprehensive energy audit was performed on your home, based on ENERGY STAR® guidelines, so you can be confident that your systems are efficient and your ducts are properly sealed.

**ENERGY STAR® Windows, Doors, and Skylights**

The installation of ENERGY STAR® labeled windows, exterior doors, and skylights can significantly save energy in your home and lower your utility bill. For this reason, the windows in your home were required to be ENERGY STAR® Southern Climate labeled (or equivalent) which was specifically designed for our type of climate zone. These ENERGY STAR® labeled products can save you 7% to 24% in your energy bill according to the EPA ENERGY STAR® Website when compared to a typical window. These windows feature double-pane glass with a special gas in between them which helps keep the heat out during the hot summer. In the winter, these windows will help prevent heat loss as well and keep your home warm and comfortable. Another feature of these types of windows is they can help protect your furniture and other articles in your home from fading due to a special coating on the glass.

All exterior doors and skylights may also be ENERGY STAR® labeled or may have an equivalent performance as ENERGY STAR® labeled ones to further maximize the energy efficiency of your home.

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**Natural Gas Connections**

Your home may have been provided with natural gas connections if natural gas was available in your neighborhood for the reason that natural gas burns cleaner than other fossil fuels, such as oil and coal, and produces less greenhouse gas per unit of energy released. For an equivalent amount of heat, burning natural gas produces about 30% less carbon dioxide than burning petroleum and about 45% less than burning coal. Combined cycle power generation using natural gas is thus the cleanest source of power available using fossil fuels, and this technology is widely used wherever gas can be obtained at a reasonable cost. Natural gas is the most efficient choice for many applications such as home heating, water heating, and cooking. Gas-fired water heaters and cooking appliances are more responsive than electrically-heated water heaters and cooking appliances for adding heat quicker.

One of the disadvantages of using electricity for heating is the amount of energy “lost” in transmission lines delivering the electricity from the power plant to the task. Gas, on the other hand, releases its heat only when ignited at the gas burner element. Keep in mind though, that electric source heat by its very nature does not emit combustion by-products such as carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide, and other airborne elements such as soot from burned dust that can be hazardous to inhale, or act as an allergy trigger. If you or anyone in your family exhibits an acute allergic reaction or sensitivity to airborne materials, you may consider living in an all-electric house as a possible solution among other options.

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**Natural Gas Benefits**

- 30% fewer carbon dioxide emissions than petroleum
- 45% fewer carbon dioxide emissions than coal
- Greater efficiency when considering transmission line loss

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**Did You Know:**

- Natural gas is typically one third the cost of electricity. However, this ratio may change from time to time depending on fluctuating demands for natural gas and coal.
Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs)

Compact Fluorescent Lights are a type of fluorescent lamp that fits into a standard light bulb socket or plugs into a small lighting fixture. The most common CFLs appear as the same size as a traditional incandescent lamp, but shaped like a spiral tube. In comparison to incandescent light bulbs, CFLs have a longer rated life and use less electricity. CFLs may cost you more to buy, but save enough money in electricity costs to make up for their higher initial price within about 500 hours of use.

Did You Know:
The average household spends more than $2,200 a year on energy bills; nearly half of which goes to heating and cooling. Homeowners can save about $180 a year by properly setting their programmable thermostats and maintaining those settings- EPA ENERGY STAR®

Maintenance: Most of the light fixtures in your home have been equipped with CFLs to help reduce your energy consumption and decrease your utility bills. At the end of their extended life when they finally burn out and need to be replaced, please replace all bulbs with CFLs. CFLs can be found at your local hardware store and come in a multitude of shapes.

Also notice on the label whether or not the lamp you are buying can be installed in an enclosed fixture. Many bathroom and kitchen fixtures include a glass dome or “bowl” that has to be totally removed to exchange lamp bulbs. Installing CFLs in these types of fixtures trap excess heat that will shorten the life of your efficient CFL bulb. You should either replace or modify the lamp fixture so that heat generated by the fixture can easily escape. Remember to use light wisely and turn off all lights that are not being used. Adopt good conservation habits by installing occupancy sensors for closets, bedrooms and exterior lighting.

Hint: when looking for bulbs make sure you look closely at “color.” Warm white will compliment warm tones more and is more agreeable for indoor use, while cool white and day light will be more appropriate for outside lighting. Color should be indicated on the packaging. Also, make sure packaging has the Energy Star® label.

Programmable Thermostat

Your home has been equipped with a programmable thermostat. By properly using this thermostat, you can save some energy in your home and this can also result in lower energy bills. One of the most important features of the programmable thermostat is that you can regulate your home’s temperature when you are not at home or when you are asleep. You can control the temperature in your home by setting the thermostat at a higher temperature during the summer and a lower temperature during the winter when you are not home. The U.S. EPA ENERGY STAR® program recommends setting your temperatures to 78° during hot weather and to 70° during cold weather seasons.

For more information on programmable thermostats visit the ENERGY STAR® website at: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=thermostats.pr_thermostats_features

Did You Know: Running a gasoline-powered lawnmower for sixty minutes can create the same pollution as driving a car up to 110 miles! - CPS ENERGY

Energy Conservation and Your Lawn

Contact CPS Energy to determine whether their “Mow-Down Smog” program is still in effect. Under this program, CPS Energy will provide the homeowner with a $40-$80 rebate for an electric-powered lawn mower in exchange for the homeowner’s gasoline-powered lawn mower. Even better would be to purchase a manual-powered lawn mower. These mowers are known by their helix-shaped blades and quiet operation. With easy annual lubrication maintenance and cutting blade sharpening, these mowers can last for many years. In addition to the lawn mower, consider replacing all your gasoline-powered and electric-powered leaf blowers.

Did You Know: CPS Energy is currently offering the Peak Saver Programmable Thermostat Program. Through this program you would allow CPS Energy to remotely access your AC to properly cycle your compressor for a short period of time during “peak hours”. CPS Energy will remotely access your thermostat during “peak” times which usually are between May through September from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm. CPS Energy will install and provide a Honeywell Programmable thermostat ($300) free of charge. There are several advantages to this program such as remote access and control to your thermostat through the internet and also, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by 10% or more.

Refer to the CPS Energy website for more information on the Peak Saver Program: http://www.cpsenergy.com/Residential/Rebates/Peak_Saver/index.asp

For more information about these ENERGY STAR® labeled products, go to: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=windows_doors.pr_windows

Refer to the CPS Energy website for more information on their “Mow-Down Smog” program at: http://www.cpsenergy.com/Residential/Rebates/Mow_Down_Smog/index.asp

Refer to the CPS Energy website for more information on their “Peak Saver” program at: http://www.cpsenergy.com/Residential/Rebates/Peak_Saver/index.asp

Remember to use light wisely and turn off all lights that are not being used. Adopt good conservation habits by installing occupancy sensors for closets, bedrooms and exterior lighting.
Tankless Water Heaters

Your home may have been provided with one or more tankless water heaters. They have been chosen and located in your home to provide dependable and constant supply of hot water needed. As with previous tank-style water heaters, use common sense to avoid activating excessive hot water demand from many different hot water fixtures running all at the same time. Refer to the manufacturers’ operations manual for more information and regular maintenance requirements.

EPA WaterSense High Efficiency Toilets (HET)

According to the EPA, toilets are the main source of indoor water consumption in your home and can account for 30% of your total indoor water use. Your home has been provided with the EPA WaterSense labeled toilets. These toilets are rated at 1.28 Gallons per Flush (gpf) and are so efficient that they can reduce the indoor water consumption by 20% when compared to a regular toilet. These significant water savings may also represent saving money in your water bill.

Hint: When replacing a toilet, always look for the EPA WaterSense labeled toilets and look for available rebates with our local utility companies.

For more information about these efficient toilets visit: [http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/toilets.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/toilets.html)

Sink Fixtures

Your home has come with sink fixtures that are low-flow. Normal sink fixtures have a rating of 1.5 gallons per minute (GPM), but can go as low as 1.0 GPM. Your home has been equipped with lavatory sink fixtures that are EPA WaterSense labeled and are rated at 1.5 GPM or less. The kitchen sink fixtures are also rated at 1.5 GPM. These low flow fixtures help to cut down on the amount of water flowing through the faucet at any given time.

Maintenance: When replacing all sink fixtures, make sure you purchase low-flow rated fixtures of 1.5 gallons per minute or less. For all shower heads you want to install a fixture that is 1.75 GPM or less. This will help you conserve water and lower your monthly water bills.

Refer to your local water utility website to see if they are offering any incentives or rebates for water conservation.

Low-Flow Basics:
- Sink and lavatory faucets: 1.5 gallons per minute or less.
- Showerheads: 1.75 gallons per minute.
Did you know: Generally, a shower uses less water than a tub bath. Especially when using low-flow showerheads, a shower uses less water than a tub bath. More importantly, consider how you take a shower. If you stand in the shower with the water flowing while you are lost in thought for an extended period of time, too much water can be lost also. It’s better to turn the shower on long enough to get wet, shut the water off while lathering and shaving, then turning the water back on again to rinse. Fixtures. The SAWS website is: www.saws.org

Hint: When buying low flow fixtures, price does matter. If you buy fixtures that are “bottom of the line” your water pressure will seem inadequate. However, this type of low pressure water can be avoided by carefully choosing fixtures that are well made. The upfront cost may be a little more (depending on which fixture you choose) but your cost savings in water will make up the difference.

Did you know: The average 8,000 square foot lawn uses nearly 3,500 gallons every time it is irrigated in mid-summer.

Native Plant Landscaping

Your home may have been landscaped with plants from the SAWS approved plant list. These approved plants are native to Texas and are able to withstand our hot and dry climate. This makes them ideal for lengthy summers with water droughts. Using plants that are native to Texas helps to reduce your water consumption and can reflect a cost savings in your monthly water bill.

Maintenance: When planting trees, shrubs, grasses or flowers please refer the SAWS approved plant list. Along with this homeowner manual you received a “San Antonio Land-scape Care Guide”, a publication SAWS provides, that will help you maintain your lawn all year. Also, refer regularly to your local water utility website to find out if any landscaping incentives or rebates are being offered.

Another option to save money is to use the Seasonal Irrigation Program (SIP) offered through SAWS. It is a lawn-watering program that bases recommended water usage on weather data that tells us how much water your lawn needs to stay green. For a copy of the SAWS approved plant list or to register for the SIP program, please go to the SAWS website at: http://www.saws.org/conservation

Hint: To learn more about how to properly care for your plants and conserve outdoor water visit the SAWS website to subscribe to their SAWS Watersaver Newsletter to receive free tips advice on water conservation and landscaping: http://www.saws.org/conservation/newsletter/

Landscaping Guidelines:

• Use only SAWS-approved plants.
• Utilize BSAG’s Landscape Care Guide.
• Consider xeriscaping.
• Check out SAWS’ Seasonal Irrigation Program.

The average 8,000 square foot lawn uses nearly 3,500 gallons every time it is irrigated in mid-summer.
On-site Vegetation

All trees, shrubs and vegetation that had to be removed to build your house were mulched and left on your home’s site. This helped decrease the amount of waste that was taken to the landfill while adding a beneficial element to your flower beds or around your trees, or to stabilize your soil.

Your builder took great care to preserve as many trees as possible on your site. Trees are an important element to any neighborhood because they provide shade for homes and yards, filter out air pollution, provide habitat for birds, produce oxygen, and increase your property value. Trees also help reduce the overall temperature of the neighborhood that is increased by asphalt, concrete and other hard surfaces. Cooler neighborhoods put less demand on your air conditioning system and do not add to the “heat-island” effect that robs us of rainfall. Your builder has also complied with the San Antonio Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO) that protects local trees from being cut down. Please do your part and abstain from cutting down trees unnecessarily.

Maintenance: When pruning trees or uprooting old shrubs, please take your clean brush to one of the many recycling centers around town. Places like the City of San Antonio Bitters Road Mulching Facility and Garden-Ville will take clean brush for free or a minimal fee. They will grind up brush and resell to homeowners for a small price (usually 3 cents per pound). Places like these reduce the amount of tree branches and shrubs that would otherwise be filling up our landfills. During the winter months, help support these types of businesses by purchasing mulch from them in order to keep your flower beds and trees warm.

Did you know:
Planting native plants is better than planting non-native plants, even when the non-native species (like ligustrum) appear to do extremely well in our climate and soils. Why? Very aggressive non-native plants, which are also called “invasive non-native” plants can damage existing ecosystems wiping out native plants and destroying wildlife habitat. Some may even consist of toxins that when consumed by local wildlife can be deadly.

Tips:
- Mulch clean brush through one of the many programs in town.
- Purchase mulch from one of these centers.
- Stay in compliance with San Antonio’s Tree Protection Ordinance.
- Remember: trees not only look good, but provide shade and cooling effects.

The City of San Antonio Bitters Road Mulching Facility
1800 Bitters Rd
San Antonio, TX 782
Dial 311 for basic questions or go to: www.sanantonio.gov/enviro/solid-waste/Treelimbs.asp
Non-Toxic Pest Control

If your home is built over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone, your builder has treated your home with a non-toxic termite barrier. Some builders also choose to provide non-toxic pest control for homes not located over the recharge zone. These types of pest controls prevent pest infiltration without adding toxic pesticides which could be harmful to the people and pets living in the home or affecting the ground water. There are many types of all alternative and less harmful pest control options to consider when treating your home for termites and other damaging pests.

Types of Non-toxic Pest Control:
- Traps for all types of pests from insects to rodents.
- Pheromones to lure creatures into the traps.
- Biological control or using certain types of plants or creatures to repel or get rid of pests. Some cats make very good roach and rodent killers.
- Herbal and growing plant repellents.
- To prevent pests from entering, make sure to keep your home clean, utilize screens on windows and doors, and seal any cracks, especially in the kitchen or bathroom.
- Inspect the ground around the perimeter of your house on a regular basis for signs of ants or termite infestation. If your house features a brick or stone veneer, do not seal intentional mortar gaps located at the foundation. These are “weep holes” that allow excess moisture to be removed from the wall cavity.
- Borate treatment by a licensed applicator.

Maintenance: When it comes time to treat your home we recommend alternatives to toxic chemically-based conventional pest control. These types are non-toxic and better for your yard, and especially recommended for families that have pets and small children.

Indoor Air Quality

Improving your indoor air quality (IAQ) benefits the health of you and your family. This is accomplished by minimizing the amount of construction materials and furnishings which produce harmful elements into the air. Improving IAQ also lessens the chance mold will appear in your house as well as reduces allergens entering and staying inside your house.

Did you know: Materials, paints and adhesives that contain VOC’s continue to emit fumes once dry and in some instances for months after application. Thus, your indoor air quality is still being contaminated after application or installation. Because people spend more than 90% of their time indoors, maintaining healthy indoor air quality is essential to promote healthy living.

Did you know: Good grades of diatomaceous earth consist of small fossils that have sharp edges. Ants, termites, fleas and other garden pests cannot move through diatomaceous earth without being cut. It’s not unlike trying to walk barefoot over a pile of sharp knife blades. Check with your natural gardening specialist for details.

Did you know: It is also important to exercise common sense when maintaining the house with your choice of furniture, toys, cleansers, air fresheners, ad-
hesives, and pest control. One family of chemicals present in homes, businesses, and even that “new car smell” is a category of chemicals called volatile organic compounds (VOC’s). These types of chemicals are harmful, especially to children, and have been shown to cause respiratory problems, asthma, fatigue, and headaches. Some airborne toxins are also endocrine disruptors potentially causing other poor health conditions depending on the chemistry, intensity, duration of exposure, and one’s resistance to these chemicals.

Many things can contribute to poor IAQ such as paints, sealants, adhesives, gas fixtures, cleaning products, fiberglass insulation and air fresheners, even the material used in cabinetry and carpeting can be problematic. Improving the air quality will save your family money with a potential for fewer illnesses, less asthmatic and allergic reactions, better attendance at school, fewer missed days from work, and decreased medical costs.

Garages

One of the best ways to minimize toxic elements in your home is to separate your living space from the garage. Your home may have been designed with a detached garage or with no garage at all. Garages can be detrimental to your indoor air quality. Harmful exhaust fumes from your car, as well as chemical product off-gassing from pesticides and similar stored materials become trapped in garages and can migrate into the home through adjoining walls, ceilings and any cracks around doorways. Unfortunately, builders often place children’s rooms above garages (in two story construction) and children receive the most exposure. By earning an ENERGY STAR® rating for your house, it demonstrates an improved separation between your garage and the rest of your house. Keep this separation maintained over the years by checking the condition of the door seals and keeping the garage well ventilated.

Proper Ventilation

Your builder has taken precautions to build your home with proper ventilation. All gas fixtures, except for the gas cook top and oven if you have them, have fresh air intakes and have been vented to the exterior which reduces the chance of combustion by-products contaminating the air in your home. Mechanical ventilation in bath and laundry rooms help remove excess moisture and stale air. If your home was built so tight that the typical air leakage through walls and the roof have been almost eliminated, your home may include a separate means to allow fresh air to enter the house replacing stale air. If your home has an energy recovery ventilation (ERV) system installed, read the manual on the unit thoroughly to understand its basic operation. Maintenance is extremely light, but must be adhered to in order to maintain the best health conditions for your family.

Dehumidification System

In our climate, humidity can be problematic. Most of the time, moisture levels are kept at comfortable levels by a properly sized air conditioner, exhaust fans, and by encouraging natural ventilation. However, in some high-performance homes, high levels of trapped humidity may remain indoors. It may be necessary to install a humidistat to determine whether a separate de-humidifier is warranted. Contact an air conditioning specialist or a design professional knowledgeable in air quality and green building concepts if you suspect your home feels uncomfortably “damp”.

Fireplaces

If your builder installed a fireplace in your home, it is equipped with a fresh air intake and glass doors that minimizes the chance that harmful smoke and fumes may escape into the living area. Please keep these doors closed at all time to ensure that harmful gasses to not contaminate the air in your home. It is also important to keep doors closed to help maintain the indoor temperature of your home. This will prevent your HVAC from working harder to heat or cool your home. Keep the chimney damper closed and well sealed when the fireplace is not being used.

Tips to Keep Your Home Healthy:

• Use organic and/or unscented cleaning products to avoid irritation.
• Use only non-toxic pest control.
• Check all finishes on furniture, floors, and walls to make sure they are low-or no-VOC.
• Keep the difference between outdoor temperature and indoor temperature as little as comfortably possible – large differences create humidity which leads to mold growth.

Did you know:

An airtight woodstove with an outside combustion air supply is considerably more efficient than a fireplace. If you are considering purchasing a woodstove, buy one manufactured since 1997 to make sure it is built in response to the latest EPA requirements for efficiency.
Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Your builder has installed carbon monoxide detectors in your home. Carbon monoxide is also referred to as the “silent killer,” as it is an odorless gas and your family will not be able to detect carbon monoxide, but will start feeling symptoms of fatigue, headache and nausea. Overexposure can be fatal.

Maintenance: Please test your carbon monoxide detector(s) and fire/smoke alarms regularly according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.

HVAC Filters

Your builder has placed a good quality filter in your HVAC unit. HVAC filters are rated by the expected amount of removal of particles of various sizes that enter your system’s return air ducts. The efficiency of filters is measured on a MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) scale. Although MERV values range from 1-16, the best range for households is from 8-11. Anything greater is much more expensive and would require a more powerful fan to push air through the filter.

Maintenance: Replace your HVAC filters at intervals recommended by the HVAC manufacturer’s instruction manual. When shopping for replacement filters, take the time to read the back to find out what services each filter provides. Some filters are better for families with sensitive allergies, while others are good for families with pets. Purchase filters that have MERV ratings between MERV 8 and MERV 11. These types of filters can be found at your local hardware stores.

Filter Comparison:
- Standard disposable synthetic filters: MERV ratings from 1 to 4, meaning they are less than 20% efficient.
- Paper pleated filters: MERV ratings from 5 to 8 are 20% to 35% efficient.
- Using MERV 8 to 11 filters increase filtering efficiencies more than 40%
Low VOC Paints

The wall paint used in your home is formulated as low-VOC (volatile organic compound) paint. This type of paint releases less toxic chemicals than conventional paint and therefore improves your indoor air quality. VOCs may be harmful to everyone in your family, but children, pets, elderly people, and people with respiratory problems or compromised immune systems are particularly vulnerable.

Maintenance: When repainting in your home, choose paints with low or no VOCs. Low VOC paint lines such as the Harmony line by Sherwin-Williams and the Air-Care line of paint by Coronado Paint can avoid the problems associated with volatile organic compound exposure. Both of these paint formulations as well as many other low to no-VOC paints can be found at area hardware stores. However, be aware that low VOC paint can sometimes still have other types of airborne chemicals such as ammonia, halogenated solvents, formaldehyde, and other harmful chemicals. If you are looking for paints that don’t contain any VOCs or other hazardous chemicals, brands such as Safe Coat, Chem-Safe, Walker Paint, and Best Paint are some of the recommended paint lines in this category. These types of paints may be harder to find, but they are the most ideal to use in your home, especially in children’s rooms. Look online for locations that supply these products.

Possible Dangers of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs):
- Eye, nose and throat irritation.
- Headaches.
- Loss of coordination.
- Nausea.
- Liver damage.
- Kidney damage.
- Central nervous system damage.
- Known to cause cancer.

Did you know:
Some harmful chemical additives do not produce an odor. These chemicals may be used as a substitute or as a mask for evaporative aromatic solvents. Because of this, one cannot rely on odor alone to determine the impact of products on air quality.

Carpet and Adhesives

If your home has been provided with installed carpeting, your builder has selected carpet, carpet padding and carpet adhesives that have been certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute’s Green Label. These selected Green Label brands release less VOC’s than conventional materials and helps to reduce the amount of potentially harmful off-gassing that are caused by carpets.

Maintenance: When replacing carpets in your home, please refer to the Carpet and Rug Institute’s Green Label list to ensure you maintain the quality of your indoor air. Also consider the use of cork, bamboo, concrete, recovered wood, and tile flooring. These types of materials are considered environmentally superior to conventional flooring because they do not need to depend on the logging of trees or using non-renewable resources in order to produce the flooring. The growing time for harvesting cork and bamboo is considerably less than harvesting wood from trees. When possible, we encourage these types of flooring because of their durability. Bamboo and cork come in a variety of stains and patterns.

Did you know:
A primary opportunity for irritants, pollens and chemicals to enter the home is on your shoes. Consider having a no-shoe household where shoes are removed when entering the house. Especially after working in the yard, it is good practice to change your clothing as outdoor chemicals, pollens and other irritants can easily move from our clothing to carpeting and furniture.