

## “How does protecting the environment protect your wallet?”

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, in the United States alone, buildings account for:

- 70% of electricity consumption
- 39% of energy use
- 39% of all carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions
- 40% of raw materials use
- 30% of waste output (136 million tons annually)
- 12% of potable water consumption

With numbers like these, it's easy to see why being green has not only an environmental, but a financial impact as well. According to the Green Building Initiative ([www.thegbi.org](http://www.thegbi.org)), green building methods go way beyond saving the environment! Green structures offer their owners a variety of financial benefits, including:

- **Lower operating costs** – equipping a structure with more efficient heating, cooling, and water systems result in lower monthly utility bills.
- **Improved construction methods** – green buildings are constructed for better protection against rain and ground water, resulting in less necessary upkeep. Plus, environmentally-friendly construction materials contribute to less waste and a conservation of our natural resources.
- **Increased resale values** – green buildings have excellent resale value. Plus, a showing of lower monthly utility bills adds to the value when it's time to sell!

Not only will you find these benefits, but by simply building green, you may reap benefits from the government as well. Different levels of government often offer tax, financial, or other incentives.

If building green means protecting the environment, and getting some financial breaks, what are you waiting for?