

Green Gets Personal

Make your home, clothes and body eco-friendly

By Nicole D. Smith

Home 'Green' Home

We've all heard the typical advice: turn off the lights when you leave a room; don't let the water keep running when brushing your teeth; lower the thermostat to the temperature you really need. But now is the time to go beyond the clichéd advice and arm yourself with new knowledge on how to keep this green planet of ours, well ... green.



Boston Coffee Table
Available at Verde Home
\$1550

This Little Light of Mine

When it comes to the lighting in your home, you've got to take a whole new approach. Atlanta resident John Gidding is a host and designer for HGTV's *Designed to Sell* and owner of John Gidding Design Inc. He says people use much more artificial light than necessary to brighten a single room. "When you walk into a room, you don't need to flood the whole room because you're going to use a corner of it. Instead, just go to the space that you are going to use, and turn on that light," Gidding says. "Put a dimmer on the overhead lighting. And ... sometimes it makes sense to use a motion sensor."



Russ Glass Lamp
Available at Verde Home
\$470

Also think about where you spend most your time in a room and place specific, dedicated lighting in that precise area, such as on a desk, around seating areas or over dining room seating, he says.

Gidding also recommends using only compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs.) "They use 75 percent less energy and they last 10 times as long." It's a bonus that CFLs save you cash, about \$30 over the bulb's lifetime.

Green Paint Comes In Many Colors



YOLO Paint
Available at ecoEMPORIUM
\$45 Gallon, \$16 quart

Before painting your living room a new color such as teal ice or chai latte, (yes, those are real colors) you need to think about the green way to go about paint. The typical paint you purchase for the interior walls of your home will give off deleterious gases, such as volatile organic compounds or VOCs, which can cause health problems like headaches, watery eyes and nausea.

This dangerous release of gases, called offgasing, can continue for years after you first paint your home or office walls. And that means you breathe VOCs as you work, sleep and relax in your home or office. "Buy the low VOC paint, which then doesn't off-gas any harmful chemicals into the atmosphere," Gidding says. "It's a little more expensive, but ... you're not putting pollutants inside your home, your lungs and into the atmosphere."

Tree-hugging Furniture

It's probably safe to say that a tree will hug anyone who uses as little hardwood as possible to make furniture. Eco-friendly furniture is a large industry today, and furniture that is considered green is made from fast-growing, sustainable woods, such as wicker and other natural materials.

Hardwoods are typically not sustainable because the trees take a very long time to grow. But, Gidding says, you still can have furniture made from hardwoods and be eco-friendly. "There are managed, sustainable forests that [are maintained for the] people who want hardwood furniture, floors and more," he says. "[Experts] manage the growth of forests, and they only [allow] a certain amount of output per year. But it is eco-friendly because these forests have a long-term growth plan; they are replanted accordingly." When shopping for furniture made from hardwoods, look for a SmartWood and Forest Stewardship Council certification. This certification denotes you are buying hardwoods from a sustainable wood source.



Canyon Arm Chair
Available at Verde Home
\$765



Jonano® eColor-grown Sol Tunic Dress
\$108.00

Green Passion for Fashion

What you wear affects the environment probably more than you think. Because of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers used in crop cultivation, Mother Nature is calling for us to find ways to be fashionable and at the same time sustain the environment. Today, there are many options for any woman who wants to wear green clothing – and we don't just mean the color of her shirt.