

# Green Homes in Miami and South FL and why you should care

Steve Gara – Miami Business and Industry Examiner – April 7, 2009

Depending on whom you ask, some of us here in South FL are either environmentally concerned or not. It's getting better but we still have a long way to go. What are the benefits of your home "going green"? It's about comfort and saving money at the same time. Let's take a further look:

Some of the key benefits include: Lower Operating Costs, Healthier Home environment (air and water quality), reduced maintenance and replacement, higher performing durable home, higher value and resale advantages (not to mention various tax incentives), safer (because of smoke, radon and carbon monoxide detectors), sustainability (using recycled and renewable energy sources) and to promote what is called these days as a "Ecogreen Luxury Lifestyle". These are the "politically correct" terms to use these days for living the "green" lifestyle.

With this in mind, in order to have a "truly" green home, one must ensure that the builders or contractors have a highly sought after certification called LEED. It stands for: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™. According to the US Green Building Council, "LEED is a third-party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance."

From a local standpoint, it seems most developers are now finally jumping on the "green" bandwagon including Boca Developers, Palmetto Homes and the Foram Group. Just last year, Miami's first green home was built with public money. To buy this home under a city program requires that the family earn no more than 120 percent of the average median income. For a family of five, including mom, \$76,875 is the cap (as of 2008). This is a pretty good deal for everyone not to mention we all get to save money and resources in the end (and of course, lessening our carbon footprints).