

# Entertainment Weekly for El Paso • Juarez • Las Cruces

# what's up

Volume 10, No. 49

September 9-15, 2009

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Most Eligible Bachelor/ettes

Best of the Best



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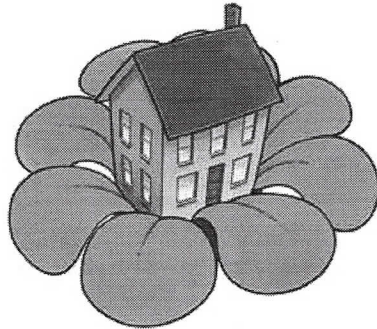
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### Other Pubs

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## Greening Your Home and Life

By Cheri Pearson



Thinking green and building green aren't just the credos of a tree-hugging, Birkenstock-clad movement.

From cleaning supplies to insulation, applying green thinking to the home enhances the well being of residents as much as it does the environment. It can and should imbue every aspect of the home – its site, design, construction and operation.

That was the gist of a speech given by green-building consultant Mick Dalrymple, named Green Pioneer 2009 by the Business Journal of Phoenix, at

a meeting of the local United States Green Building Council on Monday, July 27.

Here are some of the easier, practical suggestions culled from his presentation, "Go Green in a Weekend – 48 Hours to Green Your Home and Your Life":

- Check out the products and cleaning supplies you use. Ask yourself – "What makes it green?" Read the label, especially the fine print. Research the product. Two helpful websites: [householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov](http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov) and [cosmeticsdatabase.com](http://cosmeticsdatabase.com).
- Install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Test for radon. [epa.gov/radon](http://epa.gov/radon)
- Change a MERV8 air filter monthly. If you are buying a 99-cent air filter, it probably isn't doing much. A pleated filter is your best bet, and you may be able to find online deals and rebate offers.
- Open your windows during mild weather. Bring fresh air in!
- Paint your rooms with zero-VOC paints. They are non-toxic and quick drying. Look for the Green Seal or Green Guard certified paints.
- Switch to CFL light bulbs but be sure to dispose of properly. One such bulb has enough mercury to contaminate 300,000 gallons of water. Check with your local Home Depot and Lowe's for their recycling program.
- Leave your shoes at the door! Your shoes are one of the No. 1 ways that pollutants get into the home. Little children and pets get the most exposure.
- Use nontoxic pest control practices. Diatenatious earth is a safe way to kill bugs and keep plants 18 inches from the house, eliminating any bridges they may use into your home.
- Look at prevention. Check your home site's drainage. Have a professional check your roof leaks. Install drain pans. Check your appliance hoses. Do not place carpet in wet areas.
- Throw out the air fresheners. They are toxic.
- Use a programmable thermostat. Your air conditioner is more efficient at a constant temperature.
- Use websites like [epeat.com](http://epeat.com), which reviews electronic products based on their environmental attributes, or lack thereof.
- Vent efficiently by adding passive air return grills. If the door slams when the air comes on or if there are black streaks around the outlets, you have a pressure problem.
- Check the insulation in your attic. Rent a hopper and fill the gaps. Think of it like a beer cooler – it's not going to work if there are holes in it.

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- Insulate the roof with ceramic insulating roof paint or if your roof is tile, add a reflective foil barrier.
- Weatherstrip windows and doors. Seal those cracks.
- Install sun screens on single pane windows.
- Plant a deciduous shade tree to keep the heat off the house.
- Design and install window overhangs. Check out susdesing.com for help.
- Shop Energy Star/Energy Guide appliances.
- Don't put your refrigerator or freezer in the garage. Clean the coils. Keep 2-3 inches of clearance for the refrigerator coils.
- Install power strips for electronics.
- Increase efficiency. Air dry dishes. Install occupancy sensor dimmer timers. Wrap pipes in foam pipe insulation.
- Consider installing a rainwater catchment barrel, recirculating pump, or mini gray water tank.
- Use a broom to sweep the driveway instead of a hose.
- Define your definition of what green means to you. For instance, bamboo flooring is rapidly renewable; however, it is most likely shipped from China or Vietnam and takes dirty diesel fuel to get here. Did it require child labor? Does the enormous amount of glue and finish have toxic chemicals? For instance, there is a healthier glue available that was reverse engineered after scientists observed the strong adhesive ability of mollusks! Talk about mussel power.

Comments or questions about this story? E-mail [Secret@whatsuppub.com](mailto:Secret@whatsuppub.com)

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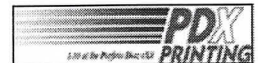
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