

HOME Rochester



Guide to Green Living For Home Owners

Green Guide Sponsored by Enterprise Community Partners

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HOME ROCHESTER GUIDE TO “GREEN” LIVING

Congratulations on purchasing your new “green” HOME Rochester home! A HOME Rochester home is a great value for several reasons including:

- ✓ Low Down Payment - HOME Rochester homes only require a down-payment of \$1,500 which makes purchasing one very affordable for most families.
- ✓ Closing Cost Grants - The City of Rochester works with the HOME Rochester program to provide closing cost assistance grants of up to \$6,000 for most HOME Rochester buyers.
- ✓ Lead Safe - Each HOME Rochester home is rehabilitated using Lead Safe Work Practices by certified contractors. All homes receive a lead clearance test to certify the home meets current lead safe standards. You received a copy of your lead paint assessment and clearance certification with your closing documents.
- ✓ One-Year Warranty on all Major Mechanical System Defects - All HOME Rochester homes receive a one-year warranty on: the heating system; electrical systems; plumbing systems (does not include clogged drains); the hot water system and replaced roofs. This warranty does not cover Acts of God, normal wear and tear, damages caused after move-in (ie. holes in the wall) or wet basements.

In addition to the four great incentives to purchase a HOME Rochester home, your home was rehabilitated using “green” or environmentally friendly materials. The materials and products used to rehabilitate your home will make your home healthier for your family and save you money on your electrical and heating bills. Most items do not require any special care other than standard maintenance to keep your home running smoothly.

What Do You Mean When You say My Home is “Green”?

Green construction is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings use resources — such as energy, water, and materials — while reducing the building’s impact on human health and the environment. Green building is accomplished through better design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal — the complete building life cycle.

Why is HOME Rochester “Green”?

HOME Rochester homes start out as vacant, existing houses that are rehabilitated using sustainable materials, non-toxic materials and materials which will save energy. Building a new home has a HUGE, negative environmental impact on our community. New homes destroy green space, require the installation of new utilities, displace wildlife, and

increase run-off into our streams, lakes and wetlands. The HOME Rochester program recycles EXISTING, vacant housing. By recycling houses, we don't cut down large amounts of trees to clear a site, use less building materials and don't have to install new utility services or streets. Everything is in place. Rehabbing a home also helps to maintain the general aesthetic character of a neighborhood. By rehabilitating vacant homes, we are not only being friendly to our planet Earth, we are being friendly to our immediate neighborhood. A rehabilitated home increases the value of every home on the street. In addition to recycling houses, we used lots of good products and processes to make your home comfortable for your family; keeping you healthy and lowering your utility bills.

Green Aspects of Your Home

- ✓ Lots of Insulation - Your home received blown-in cellulose insulation in all the exterior walls. Cellulose insulation is made from recycled newspapers and plastic. By drilling holes in the exterior walls and inserting a blower tube, we were able to tightly pack this heat saving insulation into all of your exterior walls. It's like a winter coat for your home. It will keep your family toasty all winter long during our harsh Rochester winters; and it will help keep you cooler during the heat of the summer.
- ✓ Tight Sealing - A low-emission foam was used to seal cracks and holes in your house. This tight sealing helps to keep rodents and insects out of your home, and prevents heat from escaping.
- ✓ Recycled carpeting - Your carpet was created from recycled plastic products. Not only is this great for the environment --- but your carpet is super durable! Even the comfy pad under your carpet is "green".
- ✓ Low-emission paint - The paint used in your home does not contain lead, formaldehyde, mercury or other harmful chemicals. For more information about the paint used in your home. Log on to :
<http://www.greenseal.org/certification/standards/paints.cfm>
- ✓ Low-emission varnishes and water-based polyurethane - If you have hardwood floors, they have been sanded and treated with either a low-emission varnish or a water-based polyurethane finish. Your floors are not only beautiful - they are healthy.
- ✓ Replacement windows - These beautiful windows are double-paned and prevent heat-loss through the glass. They let the sun in without letting the heat out. They also tip in for easy cleaning (be sure you use a green product to clean them!).
- ✓ High Efficiency Gas Furnace - You may have noticed some strange tubing coming off of your furnace. These tubes are to drain the condensed water created by being 92% efficient. Be certain to keep the exterior venting system clear of

snow and leaves, change your furnace filter every month and have your furnace cleaned and inspected once a year. If you do these simple maintenance items, this furnace will save your family hundreds of dollars every year.

- ✓ Proper venting - Your home has been properly vented with an appropriate roof vent and vents over the stove and in the bathroom. These vents will help moisture leave your home through the proper channels and prevent mold growth.
- ✓ Energy Efficient Lighting Fixtures - If your home had a beautiful, vintage light fixture we kept it in place to prevent waste and keep the esthetic integrity in place. However, most HOME Rochester green homes have every light fixture replaced with an energy efficient light fixture. These beautiful light fixtures use florescent bulbs which use 1/10 of the energy required by an incandescent bulb and provide just as much light. These bulbs can be purchased at your local hardware store. When the bulbs no longer work, be sure to recycle them. They can be returned to HOME Depot and Walmart stores for proper disposal and recycling.
- ✓ Low-Flow Toilet - Your toilet uses approximately 25% of the water older brands used to remove waste. Instead of flushing away 4 gallons of water with each flush - your toilet only requires 1.6 gallons of water to do the job! This will save our planet countless gallons of water over the years while it is saving your family money.
- ✓ Low-Flow Shower Head - Your attractive shower head will provide you with a comfy, hot shower without wasting water. This shower head has been designed to provide you with plenty of water while only using 2 gallons of water per minute.
- ✓ Insulated Hot Water Pipes - Your hot water main has been insulated to prevent heat loss. Now you won't have to waste water, letting your water run down the drain, while you wait for it to heat up!
- ✓ Recycled Cardboard - All of the cardboard boxing used to package the items placed in your home was recycled.

Things Your Family Can Do to Keep Your Home “Green”

Keeping a “Green” Lawn

Mowing - If your lawn is small, you can use a “Push Mower” which requires no gas or electricity. These lawn mowers are inexpensive in more ways than one. They cost far less than gas or electric powered mowers, they are easy to maintain, require only a yearly blade sharpening and a light spray of oil before putting it away for the winter. Plus no gas or utility payment to mow your lawn!

Don’t bag your trimmings - Be certain to cut your lawn at least once a week to prevent the grass from becoming too long. Then just leave the trimmings on the lawn. The trimmings will decay and supply your lawn with nitrogen, a natural “fertilizer”.

Don’t use pesticides. To prevent insects from eating your plants and flowers, simply spray them with an easy to prepare mixture of 1 gallon of water, 1 tablespoon hot sauce and one tablespoon dish soap. For more information on natural ways to keep the bugs from destroying your flowers and vegetables, log on to: www.bbg.org.

Use indigenous plants that don’t require frequent watering - Ask your local garden shop to recommend shrubs, plants and flowers that don’t require a lot of watering. Typically these plants are indigenous to our climate and environment. They will keep your landscaping looking beautiful without a lot of maintenance.

Use natural mulches - As a City resident, you may receive mulch made from indigenous trees free of charge through the City of Rochester’s “Materials Give Back Program”. The Materials Give Back program returns recycled materials and products to the public **free of charge**. Leaves are collected at curbside, treated, and turned into compost. Wood is collected and cut, to be used as firewood, or chipped, to be returned as wood chips. Holiday trees are chipped and converted into mulch. Excess chipstone from the City's Chip Seal program, scrap lumber, and buildable fill are recovered and returned. Individuals may pick up these materials to use for their flower gardens, household beautification projects, or other home improvement projects. Materials are available seven days a week, from 8:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m., at the Solid Waste Collection facility on Ferrano Street, near Colfax Street. Individuals should bring their own shovels and containers when collecting materials. Individuals are encouraged to call the Office of Customer Satisfaction at 428-5990 to check the availability of materials. If a large amount of material is requested, prior arrangements must be made through the Office of Customer Satisfaction. For more information on City of Rochester services check out: www.cityofrochester.gov.

Composting - Composting is a great way to turn organic food waste into great soil for growing your own vegetables. Most people are afraid to compost because they either don’t know how, or think it will smell and attract pests. Composting properly is easy,

affordable and clean. All you need is a black, plastic trash bin with a lid and holes drilled through the bottom for your “compost collector”. Just collect organic waste from your food like: melon rinds, potato peelings, egg shells (crush these), banana peels, strawberry hulls, tea bags, coffee grounds and carrot tops. Put these items into the plastic garbage can and cover with “brown material” like fall leaves, dirt, straw, grass clippings, horse manure (do not use dog or cat poop), sawdust or mulch. Cover the trash can and leave in the back corner of your yard --- or in a sunny area. The holes in the bottom will allow the compost to drain, while allowing worms and other microbes access to the organic garbage. The worms and microbes will speed the decomposition process. Be certain to stir the compost every week with a shovel, stick or small rake during the heat of summer. This organic mixture should begin to breakdown and form a rich brown soil for next year’s garden. For more information on composting, go to: <http://www.compostguide.com/> or call the Cornell Cooperative Extension at (585) 461-1000.

Interior Pest Control



Let's face it, pests love to bug humans! Whether it's ants, mice, roaches, rats or bats - pests may try to invade your home. Don't poison your family in an attempt to get rid of pests. There are plenty of natural methods that can be used to discourage pests from making your home, their home.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure - This old saying is certainly true with keeping pests out of your home. Keep your home clean. Remove trash regularly. Don't leave dirty dishes in your sink. Sweep and mop your floors and keep them "crumb free". If you have a dog or a cat - remove their pet feces immediately - rats LOVE to eat pet feces (it is gross, but true). Use a flea control method on your pet. If your pet gets fleas, so will your carpets and furniture. Although we have taken great care to seal all cracks, holes and access point entries for animals and pests --- some pests (such as squirrels, mice and bats) can be very persistent and gnaw a new entry point to your home. Keep your eyes open for any new activity and use a foam sealer to close the entry. Sprinkling some cayenne pepper on the hardening foam can help prevent more chewing. If the hole is large, stuff it with copper mesh (do not use steel wool) and then spray the foam. Sprinkling boric acid (available at your hardware store) will prevent roaches and other bugs from entering your home.

If your attic gets squirrels or bats, try purchasing a small strobe light. Allow the strobe light to operate day and night for one week. If the strobe light doesn't work, contact a pest removal firm that uses humane, or green methods of removal.

For more information on pest control, check out: <http://www.doyourownpestcontrol.com>

Dispose of Trash Properly



Re-cycle

A very easy way to help your environment is to recycle. Your HOME Rochester home came with a “blue box” for recycling. You are probably familiar with the “blue box” but may not be familiar with what can be placed in the “blue box”. Due to advances in recycling, more and more of your household food packaging items, can now be recycled. For a list of what can be re-cycled go to:

<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/des/index.cfm?id=209> or call (585) 428-5990 which is the 24-hour City of Rochester Customer Service line and request a copy of the DES Service Guide. This guide is full of valuable information on recycling and garbage collection. In addition to the “blue box”, your HOME Rochester home should have come with a wheeled, residential refuse collection “toter”. This is for non-recyclable garbage.

Hazardous Materials

The City of Rochester will take and dispose of hazardous materials properly including: pesticides and fertilizers, mercury, anti-freeze, old paint, drain cleaners, etc. For a list of hazardous materials the City of Rochester will take and dispose of properly go to:

<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/des/index.cfm?id=272> or call (585) 428-5990 which is the 24-hour City of Rochester Customer Service line and request a copy of the DES Service Guide.

Large Items

The City of Rochester will collect large trash items if left between the sidewalk and the curb on trash day. If you are disposing of a refrigerator or cooler, be sure to remove the doors. Mattresses, couches and construction materials all may be left out for City refuse crews to collect.

Clean - Green!



Keeping your home clean is an important way to keep your family healthy, extend the life of your homes materials, prevent pests and just plain keep your home looking terrific! Unfortunately, many cleaning products have harmful ingredients that can produce toxic fumes or even produce hazardous reactions if mixed together. What's a housekeeper to do? There are many products on the market now that are non-toxic, such as Simple Green®. Look for products that are phosphate free and do not have petroleum, nonylphenol ethoxylate or chlorine. You can go to the following website to get a list of cleaning products that are environmentally friendly:

<http://www.greenseal.org/findaproduct/index.cfm>

You also probably have some items in your pantry right now that make great, natural and cheap cleaning products. Such as:

Baking Soda - It's cheap, it's green and it's effective! Baking soda can be used to prevent odors when kept in an open box in your refrigerator and freezer. Sprinkling some baking soda on your refrigerators plastic shelves, rubbing it in with a sponge and wiping it clean with plenty of warm water, will make your refrigerator sparkle and smell terrific! Baking soda can also be made into a paste to clean pots and pans, clothing and your bath tub.

Vinegar - Although it smells bad - it cleans great! After it dries, the smell evaporates too. Vinegar is a terrific glass cleaner. Pour vinegar in a spray bottle and clean your windows until they let the sun shine in!

Vinegar and Lemon - Squeeze half a lemon into a bucket of water with a quarter cup of vinegar and mop your linoleum or tile floors. It will pick up the dirt, and leave a fresh lemon scent behind.

Use washable rags instead of paper towels - Rip up those old stained towels and make great cleaning rags! Cloth rags are more absorbent than paper towels and don't leave "lint" behind. Throw the rags in the wash and use them over and over again.

"Super-Clean" that toilet - It's tempting, and so easy to use those "hang-in-the-bowl" flush cleaners - but they are not only very bad for the environment --- they will damage the rubber plugs in your toilet tank. The chemicals from the flush cleaners will disintegrate the rubber stopper that helps your tank to fill with flushing water. If the stopper doesn't fit properly, your tank will never quite fill to the recommended amount. Fresh water will continue to "run" inside your tank, wasting gallons of water and

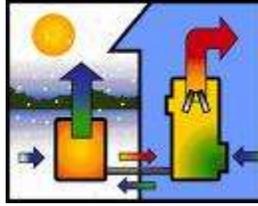
increasing your water bill. Instead of using the flush cleaner, try this method to keep your toilet clean and fresh, easily and cheaply. Take a bucket of warm soapy water and pour it down your toilet. This will flush all of the toilet water down, leaving a clean porcelain surface for you to scrub clean. Use baking soda and a sponge dedicated to just cleaning your toilet, to get in there and “super-clean” your toilet. You will be amazed at how fresh and clean your toilet will be.

Sweep, sweep, sweep - Before vacuuming, sweep under carpets, along baseboards and over rugs. The broom will dislodge ground in dirt and gather dust together for easy vacuuming. And since the broom is powered by you - you burn calories and don't increase your electricity bill. Sweeping first will cut your vacuuming time in half and make your room cleaner.

Vacuum, vacuum, vacuum - A vacuum cleaner with attachments is an excellent way to get rid of that deep, down dirt. Dirt imbedded in carpet fibers will shorten the use and attractiveness of your carpet. Sprinkle a little baking soda on your carpets. Allow it to sink in and vacuum it up. Odors will attach themselves to the baking soda particles and be vacuumed away. Vacuum the dust off of light shades, window sills, and other surfaces.

Scenting your home- Nothing makes a home seem so clean, as a fresh scent as soon as you walk in the door. No need to buy expensive sprays. Use the soil from your compost heap to grow beautiful flowers for your “cutting garden”. In Rochester, lilacs, peonies, narcissus and bush roses grow very well. All of these beautiful flowers will scent your entire house when cut in placed in vases inside your home. Unfortunately spring and summer can't last forever, so during the winter months you can create your own natural “scents” with crushed cinnamon sticks in sachet bags; poke fresh cloves into an orange and hang from a ribbon; place several lemons in a bowl.

Saving lots of Green through Proper Heating and Cooling



Changing your furnace filter - Each HOME Rochester home comes with a 90+ Efficiency furnace. A major part of maintaining that efficiency is allowing your furnace to “breathe”. A clean furnace filter is imperative. Depending on the kind of filter you have, it may need to be changed each month or every three months. Some HEPA filters can be washed clean every month. If your filter needs to be changed or cleaned monthly - change the filter when you send out your mortgage payment each month. If your filter needs to be changed every three months - change it when you pay your quarterly water bill.

Don’t block your air return vents - Not only do furnaces need clean filters to breathe, they also need clean air to circulate through their systems. Just because it’s not blowing out heat, doesn’t mean you can cover it up. Don’t cover air return vents with pictures, posters, pieces of furniture or drapes. These vents which are located near your ceiling need to provide fresh air to your furnace.

Don’t overheat your house - Remember, your HOME Rochester house has been super insulated and sealed. This means, that you can keep your thermostat down two or three degrees below what you are used to keeping it at and still keep your home toasty.

Programmable Thermostat - Each HOME Rochester house comes with a programmable thermostat. You can program the thermostat to reduce the heat in your home when you’re at work, and turn it back up right before you get home. This way, you are not paying to heat an empty house. You can also program your thermostat to reduce the heat during the night when you sleep.

Turn Off the Lights in Empty Rooms - Although it is true that your home has been outfitted with Energy Star light fixtures and compact fluorescent bulbs which will save you money on your energy bill; it still pays to turn out the lights when no one is in the room.

Saving Money, Staying Fit and Being Green



Want to save money, keep fit and help the planet? It's easy to do! Simply walk, bike or take public transportation to where you need to be! Shopping locally is also easy in the City!

Take the Bus - One of the many great aspects of HOME Rochester homes, is that they are all within a quarter mile of a bus stop! It's only \$1.00 to take the bus anywhere within Monroe County. Public transportation saves gas, reduces air emissions and saves you money. For a copy of bus schedules and maps, log on to: <http://www.rgrta.org/>

Bike- Did you know Rochester has some great bike paths? All along the Erie Canal and much of the Genesee River are excellent bike paths. These paths are free of vehicles and can take you to many great places including the University of Rochester, the Public Market, the Seneca Park Zoo and Ontario Beach! For more information about Rochester bicycling, log on to: <http://www.inforochester.com/bike.htm>

Walk - The City of Rochester is pedestrian friendly with sidewalks in every neighborhood. Most neighborhoods have neighborhood shops and restaurants. It's a great way to meet your neighborhood merchants and keep in shape. Be certain to use the crosswalks and wear comfortable shoes.

Use the Rochester Public Market - Eating food grown locally makes sense - both financially and health wise. Locally grown food is fresher than imported food and is cheaper. Our public market is a great place to get produce, fresh meats, baked goods and merchandise. It's also lots of fun. For more information on the Rochester Public Market go to: <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/prhs/publicmarket/index.cfm>.

Making Green Repairs

“Don’t put off for tomorrow what you can do today.”



Clogged Drains and Toilets - Don’t pour any chemical drain cleaners down your sink, toilet or garbage disposal! This is dangerous and can permanently damage your PVC pipes. Use a “snake” to remove blockages. A good plumbing snake costs less than \$100 and can be purchased at any hardware store. Using a natural “bacteria” powder that helps to break-down hair in tub drains is a good way to prevent clogs in the tub. A tablespoon mixed with warm water and poured down the drain every couple of weeks is a good way to prevent tub clogs. Don’t pour oil or grease down sink drains or in toilets. HOME Rochester homes do not have garbage disposals. All food waste should be thrown out or composted. Regularly pouring boiling water mixed with baking soda down your sink and tub drain is a good way to clean out your plumbing.

Stopping Drips - If your faucet is dripping call a plumber to stop the drip right away. Dripping faucets are money down the drain.

Tightening Fixtures - Due to frequent use, fixtures like door knobs start to loosen up. Use a screwdriver to tighten these fixtures and keep them secure. A tool kit should have been under your sink when you purchased your home. There are two different screw drivers in the kit which should help with this job.

Repainting - When repainting rooms, please ask the hardware store for paints and primers meeting the Green Seal G-11 Environmental Standard or “Low/No VOC” paint. These paints do not have harsh odors or use toxic chemicals in their formulations. “VOC” stands for “Volatile Organic Compounds”. Volatile, organic compounds are unstable, carbon-containing compounds that vaporize into the air as the paint dries, releasing dangerous chemicals. By not using paints that contain VOC’s, your rooms will be beautiful and healthy for your family. Instead of buying a plastic tarp from the hardware store, use old bed sheets. Old sheets move more easily than the thin plastic tarps, don’t stick together and are better for the environment.

Buying Appliances that Meet Your Needs and Budget



HOME Rochester houses typically do not come with appliances, which means you have some choosing to do. What to pick? A front loader or top loader washer and dryer set? Should you purchase a side-by-side refrigerator freezer, top freezer or bottom freezer? New appliances or used? One thing is certain, if you are buying new appliances look for the Energy Star label to make certain the appliance meets the strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the EPA and US Department of Energy.

Washer and Dryers - It is true that front loader washers and dryers save energy and make clothes cleaner while using less water -- but they cost more --- a lot more. Some of the front loader washers also require you use detergent specially formulated for their use, and this detergent also costs more. You should also consider your family's needs when purchasing a washer and dryer. Do you always open the washer mid-wash to throw in one of your child's dirty socks? If so, a front loader is not for you (they can't be opened mid-cycle).

When washing clothes, add a quarter cup of baking soda to the water. Baking soda is slightly alkaline and will soften the water, reducing the amount of laundry detergent you need to use. Baking soda in the wash will also help to reduce static electricity in your clothing. Adding a half cup of vinegar to the wash will also reduce static electricity - however, if you do use vinegar --- DO NOT USE BLEACH! Bleach and vinegar mixed together cause a chemical reaction that produces a toxic gas.

Do not overload your washer - Overloading the washer will not allow the water to flow through your clothing and get them clean. Overloading also restricts the agitator in the washing machine and can overheat the system.

Clean your lint trap - The lint trap on your dryer should be wiped free of lint every time you dry clothes. A dirty lint trap can cause your dryer to overheat. Also the long, metal tube that shunts the dryer exhaust outside should be removed and cleaned every six months.

Use Green "Dryer Sheets" - When drying your clothes, you can skip the dryer sheets which can contain many chemicals including: Benzyl Acetate, Benzyl Alcohol, Chloroform, camphor and limonene. To get your clothing smelling nice, make a sachet of natural cotton and fill it with dried organic lavender, or infuse rags with your favorite essential oil (let dry before tossing them in) and toss it in with your laundry. If your laundry has static electricity (in spite of the adding vinegar or baking soda to the wash

cycle), use the dryer until clothes are damp, then hang them out to dry. This will save electricity and your clothes will not develop the static electricity generated by their being spun around in the heated dryer. If you must use the dryer, hang your clothes on a plastic hanger -- then take a metal hanger and reach up underneath the garment with the hanger and sweep it back and forth. The electricity will be attracted to the metal hanger and your clothes will not retain static.

Refrigerators - When shopping for a new refrigerator/freezer unit, look for the Energy Star certification. Energy Star qualified refrigerators require about half as much energy as models manufactured before 1993. Top-freezer and bottom-freezer refrigerators are more energy efficient than "side-by-side" models, and they are less expensive.

Stoves/Ranges - It is important for both energy use and home safety to use the right sized pot on stove burners. A 6" pot on an 8" burner wastes over 40 percent of the burner's heat. Using the right sized pot on stove burners can save about \$36 annually for an electric range, or \$18 for gas. Covering your pots when cooking reduces the amount of energy used, keeps your kitchen cooler and cooks your food faster. Covering your pot also seals in more flavor. If you have a gas range, be certain to keep the burners clean to ensure maximum efficiency. Blue flames mean good combustion; yellow flames mean service may be needed to ensure the gas is burning efficiently.

Air Conditioners - When buying new heating and cooling equipment such as a central air conditioning unit, proper sizing and quality installation are critical to your home's energy efficiency and comfort. Remember: Bigger doesn't always mean better. Oversized equipment can cause reduced comfort and excessive noise. Oversizing also can shorten the life of the equipment by causing it to cycle on and off more frequently than a properly sized unit. However, undersized equipment can reduce the efficiency and accelerate wear on system components, leading to early failure.

Thank You.

Thank you for buying a green HOME Rochester house. We hope this home meets your family's needs for many years to come. We hope that your home will be a good investment, as well as a place where happy memories are created. We hope that all of the green aspects of your home make it affordable as well as beautiful and comfortable.

If you have a moment to give us feedback on this Green Manual, it would be terrific. Please send your comments to mzinter@grhp.org. Write "Green Manual" in the subject line. If you've found something helpful let us know. You can also let us know if you found this manual to be inefficient, or if something should be added.

Thank you for your time. Congratulations on achieving your dream of homeownership!