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Homes are becoming 'greener'

More emphasis being placed on energy efficiency, builders say

By [Dave Anderton](#)

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Hybrid vehicles and massive wind parks are not the only ways to combat the mounting evidence of a warming planet.

A green building standard in the construction of homes and office buildings is gaining popularity among architects, engineers and builders.

More than 300 building professionals, along with Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson and Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon, gathered Wednesday at the second annual Salt Lake Sustainable Building Conference.

Green building incorporates everything from using recycled materials and natural lighting to solar panels and drought-tolerant landscaping in new construction.

"It's becoming more in demand as the consumer gets more educated," said Sam Peterson, chief executive of Enerbilt Corp., a Salt Lake-based builder specializing in energy efficient building systems. "There's a natural resistance to change within the building industry. It's challenging to find the right people."

Peter McMahon, president of Kennecott Land, which oversees the massive Daybreak subdivision in South Jordan, said while other homebuilders may incorporate some green building aspects, Kennecott Land likely does more.

"We capture all of our stormwater," McMahon said. "We use the lake as both an amenity and in irrigation. We do a lot of natural landscaping. We do a whole variety of environmental management things."

In October, the U.S. Green Building Council awarded Kennecott Land a "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" Silver rating for the Daybreak Elementary School and Community Center, which uses a ground-source heating and cooling system and is estimated to save roughly 25 cents per square foot.

In March, Kennecott Land will release its first sustainable development report, a company



The Daybreak subdivision in South Jordan has incorporated many energy-efficient features, its builders say.

Stuart Johnson, Deseret Morning News

assessment of its performance in protecting the environment.

Despite efforts to build green, local ordinances often prevent people from incorporating sustainable practices, according to Anderson.

"For instance, the ban on white roofs makes absolutely no sense because you can save tremendous amounts of energy by reflecting the sun away," Anderson said. "Also, the problems people have had in putting solar PV panels on their roofs in historic districts. There are a number of those kinds of things that arise where I just think we need a wholesale review of our ordinances."

Alan Rindlisbacher, director of marketing for The Layton Companies, a Sandy-based commercial builder, said LEED certification and green building is the main topic of discussion among national builders.

"If you're building under those LEED standards, you are working to recycle the materials that you're taking out and you're also using reclaimed materials coming in," Rindlisbacher said. "You've got energy savings. You've got sustainability. You've got environmental consciousness. I think those are the things that are important."

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