

TIPS FOR BUILDING AN ECO-FRIENDLY HOME



We've come a long way since the days of Asbestos ceilings and long-drop toilets. In the modern building age, we now have recycled rubber roof tiles and water-saving flush mechanisms. Those building a home from scratch today have the opportunity to build an entirely eco-conscious home from the ground up.

ENLIST AN ECO-SPECIALIST

In general, the whole process of building can be incredibly wasteful. Today, building can also be

accomplished in an environmentally responsible way if you find a contractor that specialises in green projects. You can visit the Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA) – the council that regulates standards of environmentally responsible building in South Africa – website for a list of accredited professionals who can assist and advise on various projects.

MAXIMISE NATURAL ADVANTAGES

Hiring an eco-aware architect is also vital in these sorts of projects. For a home to be truly sustainable, it needs to be built in such a way as to make the most of its available natural resources. The architect will have to consider the climate surrounding the home to ensure that, once built, the home will be naturally well-insulated, negating the need for artificial heating and cooling. In other words, architects should consider the position of the homes in relation to various climate conditions (for example, where the sun will catch, which direction the wind will connect with the home, etc.) in order to maximise natural means of heating and cooling.

BE FIT TO SAVE

In order to use resources wisely, those building new homes should install as many energy and water saving fittings as possible, such as energy-saving light bulbs, toilets with dual-flush systems, and water flow restrictors in showers.

ECO GARDENS

For those hoping to install a pool, there is even a green solution for this. As an example, eco-pools can make use of natural filtration systems such as adjacent vertical gardens. The plant roots from these gardens filter nutrients from the water in the pool, which in turn keeps the pool clean, and eliminates the need for expensive chemicals and weekly pool maintenance.