

# build it smart!

## Some Help to Get You Started with Energy-Saving Design & Other Green Building Practices

The County of Ventura & local cities encourage you to make your building project as energy efficient & ecologically responsible as possible.

Designing a home or commercial structure to minimize use of energy and resources helps everybody: Owners and tenants benefit from reduced energy bills and operating costs as well as improved health and productivity, and the whole community benefits from a building that produces fewer greenhouse gases over the life of the building—improving the surrounding environment long into the future.

That's pretty smart.



*VCERC's expert energy efficiency advice is available to you free of charge—make VCERC your first stop.*

*Get free design assistance, improve energy efficiency & qualify for rebates from the Savings By Design program.*

*Learn more about Build It Green's comprehensive green building guidelines.*

If you'd like to maximize the energy efficiency of your building project or integrate other "green" building measures, it is important to start as early as possible in the design process.

Here are some resources to help you get started.

*Check out the Build It Smart website, an information & news website designed to encourage energy- and resource-efficient building practices & land use decisions—with a focus on Ventura County.*

## Ventura County Energy Resource Center

### Ventura County's Local Building Efficiency Experts



**VCERC is available to review your plans and make suggestions for improving energy efficiency.**

The Ventura County Energy Resource Center (VCERC) provides programs to help reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency in Ventura County.

VCERC has current information on utility rebates and incentive programs; regularly holds free half-day workshops on various building energy efficiency topics; assists public agencies with energy management services including energy equipment retrofits and other upgrades; and maintains a drop-in center with energy efficiency exhibits and information for business, commercial and residential applications.

A visit to the Energy Resource Center early in your project design phase could yield significant benefits—make this your first stop.

VCERC was created by the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance, Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company, and is funded by the California Public Utilities Commission.

805/289-3335

[www.vcenergy.org](http://www.vcenergy.org)

## California New Homes (ENERGY STAR) Program

### Free Design Assistance, Financial Incentives (Residential)



**The California New Homes Program offers cash rebates for new homes that exceed Title 24 energy efficiency standards by at least 15%.**

**Ventura County's climate zones are:**

<b>Coastal</b>	<b>Zone 6</b>
<b>Inland</b>	<b>Zone 9</b>
<b>Mountains</b>	<b>Zone 16</b>

**Rebate totals are calculated based on climate zone.**

The California New Homes Program, offered through Southern California Edison, provides financial incentives for building new homes that exceed California's Title 24 energy efficiency standards by at least 15% and meet the ENERGY STAR guidelines. Amounts awarded range from \$400 to \$700, depending on climate zone and efficiency. Program participants select from a menu of prescriptive measures, such as the installation of select ENERGY STAR appliances, to help qualify for incentives. While the program is geared toward high-volume builders, builders of a single home may also qualify. Incentives for multifamily units (at a lower rate per unit) are also available.

Staff at the New Homes Program (which include LEED Accredited Professionals and Title 24 analysts) are available to provide technical analysis of your home plans for energy efficiency. The New Homes Program also offers training and marketing assistance for developers.

A project that meets the New Homes Program energy efficiency goal may also qualify for other incentive programs. Qualifying for a New Homes Program rebate can get a home most of the way toward meeting the criteria to receive a \$2,000 federal tax credit, and rebates for new home solar photovoltaic installations, offered through the New Solar Homes Partnership, are only available if energy efficiency standards of at least 15% beyond Title 24 have first been met.

818/325-3130

[www.sce.com](http://www.sce.com)

## Savings By Design

### *Free Design Assistance, Financial Incentives (Commercial, Industrial & Agricultural)*

The Savings By Design program, offered through Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas, provides up-front energy efficiency design assistance for new buildings or major renovations, as well as financial incentives based on project performance. Services begin in the project design phase and continue through construction completion. Design assistance can range from simple design review and efficiency upgrade recommendations to complete computer simulation analysis comparing a number of alternative systems and integrated building design options. Financial incentives—up to \$150,000 or up to 50% of the cost of the energy efficiency upgrades—are available for projects that exceed thresholds established by the program.

Southern California Edison 805/654-7447

[www.savingsbydesign.com](http://www.savingsbydesign.com)

Southern California Gas 213/244-3350

[www.socalgas.com](http://www.socalgas.com)



*The new administration building at Ojai's Nordhoff High School used the Savings By Design program to improve energy efficiency.*

## Build It Green & GreenPoint Rated

### *California's Green Building Guidelines & Certification Program (Residential)*

Build It Green is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote credible and consistent green building standards throughout California. Build It Green has developed comprehensive green building guidelines for three categories of buildings: new homes, home remodeling and multifamily developments. These guidelines offer project design suggestions for:

- conserving natural resources
- using water wisely
- using energy wisely
- improving indoor air quality
- planning for livable and vibrant communities

The measures range from common-sense recommendations such as using water-saving showerheads to more sophisticated strategies such as installing renewable energy systems. The guidelines are accompanied by a GreenPoints checklist, which assigns point values for recommended practices based on their benefits to the homeowner and the environment.

Build It Green also offers "GreenPoint Rated"—a green home rating program. GreenPoint Rated provides an objective, third-party verification system that rates new homes in five environmental categories. Homes that score 50 points or above earn the right to use the GreenPoint Rated logo. Home buyers and builders both benefit from this validation of superior environmental responsibility from a trusted independent source.

Build It Green also provides technical information and assistance, professional training, workshops, presentations and green home tours.

510/845-0472

[www.builditgreen.org/](http://www.builditgreen.org/)



*Build It Green promotes the use of consistent green building guidelines throughout California.*



*GreenPoint Rated is Build It Green's green building rating program.*

## LEED

### **National Green Building Certification Program (Commercial & Residential)**



**LEED is a national certification program that provides a definitive standard for what constitutes green building.**

**The LEED plaque is recognized nationwide as proof that a building is environmentally responsible, cost-effective and a healthy place to live and work.**



**GBCVC members keepin' it green.**

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Green Building Rating System™ is a well-respected, national green building certification program. LEED provides a definitive national standard for what constitutes a green building.

LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a building project meets the highest performance standards. Candidate buildings are rated on a point system. Qualifying projects are awarded one of four certification levels: Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum (highest). The LEED plaque is recognized nationwide as proof that a building is environmentally responsible, cost-effective and a healthy place to live and work.

A program of the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health:

- sustainable site development
- water savings
- energy efficiency
- materials selection
- indoor environmental quality

LEED programs address every building type and phase of a building life cycle. Specific LEED programs include:

- new commercial construction and major renovation projects
- existing building operations and maintenance
- commercial interiors projects
- core and shell development projects
- homes (*still in pilot phase of development*)
- neighborhood development (*still in pilot phase of development*)
- guidelines for multiple buildings and on-campus building projects
- LEED for schools (*still in pilot phase of development*)

National  
202/828-7422  
[www.usgbc.org/](http://www.usgbc.org/)

Los Angeles Chapter  
213/689-9707  
[www.usgbc-la.org/](http://www.usgbc-la.org/)

### **Green Building Council of Ventura County Local Green Building Education & Advocacy Group**

The Green Building Council of Ventura County (GBCVC) was formed to advise the community about green building technologies, development, resources and materials while establishing a forum for public interest in green building. The group holds monthly meetings and coordinates lectures, classes and other events. Its website features a calendar of local events, profiles local case studies and has other helpful information. Some GBCVC members are LEED Accredited Professionals.

contact@gbcvc.org  
[www.gbcvc.org/index.htm](http://www.gbcvc.org/index.htm)

## How to Find Architects and Builders

The **Green Building Council of Ventura County** offers a membership list on its website. Membership does not certify these individuals in any way, but may indicate their interest in the topic.

[www.gbvc.org/get\\_involved/membership.htm](http://www.gbvc.org/get_involved/membership.htm)

**LEED Accredited Professionals** (LEED APs) have demonstrated understanding of green building practices and principles and how they apply to the LEED Green Building Rating System by passing the LEED accreditation exam. LEED APs should have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the LEED design process and streamline the application and certification process. These professionals are more likely to be involved in the design and construction of large commercial and institutional buildings than residential buildings.

[www.usgbc.org/LEED/AP](http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/AP) (click on "LEED AP Directory")

Professionals listed as **Certified Green Building Professionals** (CGBPs) have completed an in-depth training course in green building practices. The certification program is administered by Build It Green and is open to all California building professionals (architects, contractors, engineers, interior designers, real estate professionals, solar contractors, specialty trades, etc.). Individuals are required to participate in a 16-hour course that provides a comprehensive overview of the core principles of green building: energy efficiency, resource conservation and improved indoor air quality. Those who complete the class and pass the final exam are then recognized as Certified Green Building Professionals, and continuing education credits are required to keep certification current.

[www.builditgreen.org](http://www.builditgreen.org)

(The CGBP list is mostly Northern California-focused, but more Southern California builders are being added all the time.)

The **Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance** has recently launched a Registry of Energy Professionals, which lists local professionals with skills and expertise in the area of energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy management. Listings will include:

- architects
- licensed contractors
- mechanical engineers
- electrical engineers & lighting specialists
- energy planners and LEED accredited professionals
- renewable energy contractors
- certified energy managers and energy engineers
- water and wastewater treatment engineers and operators
- controls specialists

805/289-3335

[www.vcenergy.org](http://www.vcenergy.org)

**Sustainable Sources Directory** provides a searchable database of green building professions as a networking resource ONLY, and makes no claims to the quality or appropriateness of goods or services provided by any individuals or companies listed.

<http://directory.greenbuilder.com>



*Energy-smart greenhouse in Oxnard.*



*Solar-powered business in Ventura.*



*LEED-inspired police station in Moorpark.*



*Green remodel in Ojai.*

## Tax Incentives, Rebates & Incentives

A number of government- and utility-sponsored websites offer links and information about additional incentive programs. It's worth it to explore a variety of listings; your project may qualify for multiple rebates, loans and grants.

### Federal Tax Incentives

Information on federal income tax incentives for energy efficient products and technologies.

[www.energytaxincentives.org](http://www.energytaxincentives.org)

### Utility Rebates and Incentives

Local utility companies offer various incentive programs to offset the capital cost of installing high-efficiency equipment or systems. Programs are available for large and small projects—from complex industrial equipment to simple lighting systems—as well as for new or retrofit equipment.

The staff of the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance (805/289-3335) can point you toward the programs most appropriate for your project, or see the utility websites below:

[www.sce.com/RebatesandSavings](http://www.sce.com/RebatesandSavings)

[www.socalgas.com/energyefficiency](http://www.socalgas.com/energyefficiency)

### California Friendly Home Program

California Friendly Home Program is a water conservation equipment rebate program of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in partnership with Calleguas Municipal Water District (MWD). Incentives are available to builders of single- or multifamily homes for installing high-efficiency equipment including clothes washers, toilets, "smart" irrigation controllers and spray heads. Model homes can also receive incentives for installing water-efficient landscapes. Only available to customers served by Calleguas MWD or its purveyors; this generally includes the cities of Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Camarillo, Oxnard and Moorpark and surrounding unincorporated areas.

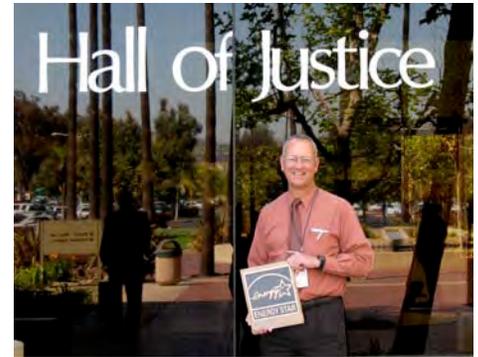
[www.bewaterwise.com/rebates01.html](http://www.bewaterwise.com/rebates01.html)

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**Award-winning energy efficiency at the Ventura County Government Center.**



**Downtown Fillmore built for mobility.**



**Energy-efficient and affordable housing in Santa Paula.**



**Built smart in Simi Valley.**