

Green Dwelling in Cle Elum: A Case Study



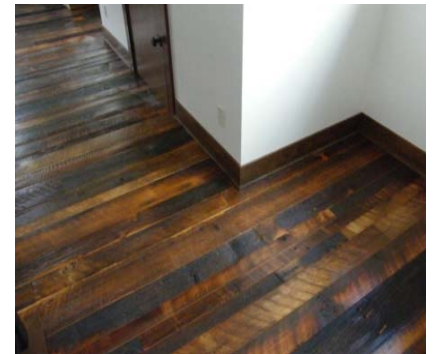
For **Jeff Schafer, Merle Inc.**, building green is just the way he has always done things. So, when it came time to construct his personal home, there was no doubt how it should be done. The 2,400 square foot, neo-Craftsman-style home (with an auxiliary living unit of 600 square feet above the garage) will be the first Built Green®-certified home in downtown Cle Elum, Washington. Schafer is working to achieve the coveted, highest 4-Star rating from the Central Washington Built Green Association.

Fifteen years ago when he started to build homes, Schafer did his homework. He attended classes, seminars, conventions and read builder magazines. He also talked with other builders. As a result of his research he began with the idea of building energy efficient homes with a focus on clean indoor air quality. The concept of green was just a starting point. He also wanted to build homes that “work; homes that will work in the future.”

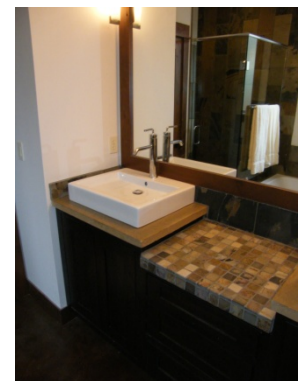
Homes that **“work”**—energy efficient, low-maintenance, and built with indoor environmental quality in mind—can often come with a bigger price tag. This is a trend that Schafer would like to help reverse. On his company website his mantra states that “...it is possible to build a beautiful home without having to break the bank.” He aims to make good on that promise and prove it by opening his own home as a demonstration project. According to Schafer, **“There are many money saving ideas in the green concept, you just have to look and be an active participant.”** Visitors to the home will see some money-saving ideas in practice, as well as many products and processes that go into a green home.



Special care was taken to preserve trees during site grading



Salvaged floors from Cle-Elum Airport-Wood River Hardwoods



Squak Mountain Stone™ and remnant stone countertops

The home is built on an in-fill, city lot within walking distance to many city services including restaurants, shopping and the post office, reducing the family's carbon foot-print. An additional living unit has been designed over the garage which provides the opportunity for more than one family to occupy the lot.

Energy efficiency was paramount, given the extreme temperatures in Cle Elum. Blown-in closed-cell insulation, in-floor radiant heat, a high-efficiency demand hot-water heater and low-e windows create a comfortable, cost effective home. **Interior air quality** is preserved with only hard-surface flooring, natural materials, low VOC paints and wood finishing done offsite.

Costs were kept reasonable by **material efficiency** such as using the concrete slab on the main floor as the finish material, working with suppliers to incorporate end lots and returning materials into the home.

Building a green home—especially one on a budget—can present challenges when sub-contractors are unfamiliar with green techniques. Schafer turned the experience into an opportunity to raise their level of awareness, achieving his goals and paying it forward. The result is deep-green home that's affordable and educational. That *works*.

References

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