

Builders Rank the Most, Least Popular Green Practices

You can hype a new home's hardwood floors and extra storage until you're blue in the face. But you won't get nearly the kind of foot traffic as those who tout a home's green features.

Home builders are becoming increasingly aware of that fact, which is evident in the results from an NAHB survey conducted last month when builders were asked which green products and practices they use.

At the top, low-e windows are commonly used by 95% of the builders. Others in the top 5 green products include high-efficiency HVAC systems (92%), programmable thermostats (88%), Energy Star-rated appliances (80%), and energy-efficient duct systems (78%).

Mark Konter, vice president of Konter Quality Homes in Savannah, Ga., participated in the builder survey and said he wasn't surprised at all by the results.

"We're seeing that in our market of move-up buyers, there is strong demand for certain green products and practices, but only to a degree," Konter said. "Things like solar panels and on-demand water heaters are products we use on occasion, but generally only by request.

"The top half of this list of [green] products and practices have been pretty much the standard for us for several years. However, we haven't seen a big increase in consumer awareness of or demand for most of the practices in the bottom half of the list."

It's no coincidence that the results from January's builder survey closely mirror the results of a 2016 NAHB study on home buyer preferences: Three of the top five features buyers want are related to energy efficiency.

Between 87% and 90% of all buyers in the survey ranked having Energy Star-rated windows and appliances, and an Energy Star rating for the whole house as either highly desirable or essential elements for their next home.

To see a full list of most and least commonly used green products and practices, go to economist Paul Emrath's post in [EyeOnHousing](#).