

# Maximizing Building Performance

## Through Environmental Strategies

People ■ Projects ■ Processes ■ Products

At every industry event and in frequent conversations, an often-asked question among facilities professionals – you, the *Buildings* reader – is, “How can I get my hands around this whole environmental thing?”

**You may not realize it, but you already are.**

Every day in your building management practices, as well as in your construction and modernization project planning, you’re confronting, questioning, and, yes, addressing the issues of environmental sensitivity. Sustainability is about energy efficiency, about workplace productivity. It’s looking at cost and containment of resources, of the longevity and durability of products used in your facilities.

**In other words, it’s about performance.**

Do you get sidetracked by what appears to be a “mystical” green philosophy? If so, ask yourself: Are you interested in best practices? In reducing costs – without sacrificing occupant comfort? Do you keep a close eye on energy costs, consumption, and the bottom line?

Of course you do.

Don’t underestimate your influence on this legacy of the buildings in which you are involved. Get back to basics. Fundamental values are green, are sustainable, are realizable.

**Think about your vantage point. You are already making a difference.**



This in-depth report provided by the *Buildings* Creative Staff:

- Linda K. Monroe ([linda.monroe@buildings.com](mailto:linda.monroe@buildings.com)), Editorial Director
- Regina Raiford Babcock ([regina.raifordbabcock@buildings.com](mailto:regina.raifordbabcock@buildings.com)), Senior Editor
- Jana J. Madsen ([jana.madsen@buildings.com](mailto:jana.madsen@buildings.com)), Senior Editor
- Leah B. Garris ([leah.garris@buildings.com](mailto:leah.garris@buildings.com)), Editorial Coordinator
- Robin Suttell, Contributing Editor
- Elisa A. Geneser ([elisa.geneser@buildings.com](mailto:elisa.geneser@buildings.com)), Design Manager
- Scott Easton ([scott.easton@buildings.com](mailto:scott.easton@buildings.com)), Graphic Designer

## Green: Who Gets It, Who’s Got it, and Who’s Getting Left Behind

The movement took hold slowly. First there were the rising voices of tree huggers that advocated the importance of saving the rainforest. Then there was Earth Day, giving birth to the recycling center and phrases like, “reduce, reuse, recycle.” With an entire universe of existing buildings exceeding 4 million and the certainty of continued development forever on the horizon, the real estate industry has awakened to the importance of being green.

Today, awareness about environmental preservation means smart operations; energy efficiency; preserving the quality of indoor and outdoor air; and meeting local, state, and federal regulations. Building professionals who once thought it seemed too costly or compromised quality are taking a cold, hard look at the bottom line and starting to unravel those green building myths.

While not everyone is building green, interest in the process is overwhelmingly high. In a survey conducted among building professionals in August 2002 by *Buildings* magazine and the Corporate

*continued on page 28*

“ There’s a huge explosion going on; the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) calls it ‘market transformation,’ and I think they’re right. I’m convinced that, as in so many things in today’s world, things get so complex that unless you’re really into something, you don’t fully understand what’s going on. That’s something we really have to pay attention to, in terms of our sustainable building practices. I don’t want to over-simplify it, but you have to have [sustainable] goals that are clear, specific, measurable, and understandable.”

– Jim Toothaker, Former Bureau Director, Department of Environmental Protection, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, now practicing as an independent consultant in high-performance green building services, Etters, PA

