

Values To Be Used Choosing Materials, Components and Systems

***This list was originally compiled for the Friend's Center in San Diego, Ca.**

- 1. Indoor Air Quality/Occupant Health:** Does this component/system contribute adversely to occupant health? Does this component/system emit VOCs? If so, can it be reliably sealed? We should strongly consider the effects of air, noise, and light pollution for even the environmentally hypersensitive.
- 2. Durability:** How long will this component/system last in normal service to which it is about to be exposed? Is there a warranty? How important is it for us to have components that are very long-lived? How likely is the destruction of this component by natural causes (like fire, flood, earthquake, insects, mold, algae, rot, etc.)?
- 3. Is this material fire-resistant or fire-retardant?** Will it help protect my home in fire and other natural circumstances of the region?
- 4. Maintenance:** How much time, effort and/or expense will be necessary to keep this component/system in good operating condition throughout its life? Can this component/system be cleaned by non-toxic means?
- 5. Energy Efficiency (as used in Bldg. when occupied):** How much will it cost us in terms of dollars, and the earth in terms of energy and resources to live comfortably in our building with this component/system?
- 6. Aesthetics, If Component/System is Visible:** Does this component/system contribute to the overall design aesthetic and architectural character of our building?
- 7. Reused:** Since the very least impact on all of the earth's systems (energy, habitat, environment, landfill) would be to use a component/system in our building that is already produced, is this component/system used and acceptable?
- 8. Reusable:** Can this component/system be reused at the end of our building's life, thereby keeping it out of the landfill and even the recycle path?



9. **Recycled:** Can this component/system be obtained with a high percentage of recycled content? This could keep materials out of the landfill and reduce the amount of material to be mined or harvested from our environment. The energy required to recycle a material is often many times less than that needed to produce it from virgin materials such as ore. Have we considered post industrial and post consumer percentages?
10. **Recyclable:** Can this component/system be recycled during the construction phase (construction waste) and at the end of its life or that of our building? Is this product biodegradable and/or compostable?
11. **Sustainably Produced:** Has this component/system been produced from materials that have been sustainably mined or harvested so as to minimize the continued destruction of wilderness and environment? Are any of the component materials from rare or endangered resources?
12. **Hazardous By-Products of Production/Demolition:** Has this component/system been produced with the least harm to our environment (air, water, soil) and to production/demolition workers from toxic releases or less than acceptable working conditions? Has this product been tested on animals?
13. **Cost (Incl. Installation):** Does this component/system have an acceptable cost?
14. **Embodied Energy:** Have we chosen a component/system produced using the least amount of energy? Is this component/system manufactured locally with minimal transportation energy expended?
15. **Local Culture:** Does the component/system contribute to local indigenous building methods or the local economy? Are local cultures and ethnic populations recognized and honored by this component/system, its design and method of construction?
16. **Codes:** Does this component/system meet local building codes?

