



Sustainability

DEFINITIONS

Economic sustainability: Adapting business practices for the use of renewable resources and to be accountable for the environmental impacts of those practices.

Ecological sustainability: the ability of an ecosystem to maintain ecological processes, functions, biodiversity and productivity into the future.

Social Sustainability: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Habitat for Humanity believes that sustainable practices should be the standard, not the exception, for all developers, everywhere. To that end, the benefits of doing business are carefully weighed against the short- and long-term costs to compel solutions that will minimize the long-term ecological, social and economic impact on our families, community, and planet. While Habitat's focus is economics-based, ecological and social elements are necessary threads in weaving a fabric of sustainability.

Sustainable practices require efficient management of **energy**, **waste**, **materials** and **water**. What is Greater Cleveland Habitat doing to operate in a sustainable way?

- ENERGY
 - Home Design
 - Design of energy efficient homes to lower operating costs over time
 - Building tight, well-insulated homes with permeable vapor barriers and excellent venting
 - Exceeds 5-star (highest rating) Energy Star Rating
 - Building a 2x6 (approx. R-23), instead of the standard 2x4 (approx. R-17) wall system
 - Insulating the foundations with R-12 foam and providing an R-43 between the 2nd floor & attic
 - Sheathing exterior walls with ½", R-3 foam
 - *Investigation of future alternative foundation systems to achieve greater energy efficiency*
- WASTE
 - Reduce
 - Home Construction

- Conserving lumber by designing for the least possible waste, building on 24” rather than 16” centers and utilizing drywall clips instead of wood studs, ladder ties instead of building posts, etc.
 - Operating all Habitat job sites to a standard of “Near Zero Waste”
 - Recycle
 - Facility
 - Requiring all paid staff and regular volunteers to “participate in Habitat’s recycling program and encourage others to do the same” and including this mandate as both a line item on all job descriptions and a section within annual performance appraisals
 - Eliminating “waste baskets” from individual desks and public meeting areas and switching to clear plastic trash bags to make certain that only non-recyclable items go into the “trash only” dumpster
 - Providing readily accessible collection and storage containers for paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, and aluminum throughout the facility
 - Conducting an ongoing paper-drive fund-raiser and encouraging all constituents and visitors to recycle paper at Habitat with a tag line on all outgoing e-mail, banners on our web-site, etc.
 - Participating in Habitat for Humanity’s national *Cars for Homes* fund-raising project, encouraging the donation of viable and/or scrap vehicles with proceeds returned to the local Habitat affiliate
 - Home Construction
 - Sorting excavation and construction debris to maximize re-use and/or recycling of stone, brick, metal, wood, particleboard, glass, plastic, and organic materials from our jobsites
 - Reuse
 - ReStore
 - Habitat’s ReStore (www.clevelandrestore.org) continues to be one of the largest recycling operations in Cuyahoga County, diverting thousands of tons of typically wasted resources from local landfills while providing the public with low-cost access to tools and materials for home renovation and repair, in keeping with our mission to eliminate poverty housing.
 - Donations to this ever-growing program now include regular recycling of unwanted construction materials by professional remodelers, major builders, hardware suppliers, big box stores and suburban homeowners
 - Each year dozens of organizations, businesses, congregations and youth groups conduct tool drives that rescue unused tools from suburban garages and basements so that Habitat can put them to use, or the ReStore can recycle them back to the community
 - Habitat staff and volunteers regularly rescue salvageable materials prior to demolition of both residential and commercial structures and we are partnering with other organizations that will be pursuing comprehensive deconstruction as an alternative to demolition
- MATERIALS
 - Choice of energy efficient products
 - Utilizing highly efficient window systems, tank-less water heaters, 90% efficient forced-air furnaces, and Energy Star rated appliances
 - Based on universal design principals using optimum value engineering (OVE) techniques to minimize non-renewable material use
 - Installations for improved quality of life and improved Indoor Air Quality

- Installing carpet products with recycled backing and minimum off-gassing
 - Using low VOC paints (minimum off-gassing)
 - Air conditioning and non-toxic flooring products for medical cases
 - *Preparation for future use of recycled cellulous insulation to eliminate use of fiberglass*
- WATER
 - Landscaping with indigenous species and providing all organic lawns to conserve water
 - *Looking at future use of rainbarrels*

While addressing **economic** concerns through efficient use of energy and materials and **ecological** concerns through designing for increased quality of life and decreased environmental impact, Habitat pursues **social sustainability** through utilization of local resources.

- Support of local business
 - Buy goods locally
 - Four of our five sub-contractors are minority-owned Cleveland businesses
- Partnerships
 - Providing training opportunities for Union Apprenticeship Programs
 - Collaborating with Neighborhood Progress Inc., EcoCity Cleveland and Cleveland Institute of Art, to bring a touring show of affordable, green, housing designs, based on Habitat for Humanity homes, to Cleveland in 2007.
 - Participating in Cleveland Green Building Coalition's Emerging Green Designer's Symposium as the 2007 "client" for a year-long educational series, for intern architects, about greening home design and construction techniques
 - Participating in Habitat for Humanity International's 2007 *National ReStore Conference* in Austin, Texas and the *Focus on the Future Conference* in New Orleans, Louisiana
 - Participating in Entrepreneurs for Sustainability (E4S) *Sustainability Implementation Program*
 - Collaborating with Prospectus Architecture, City Architecture, Doty and Miller and others to continuously improve Habitat for Humanity designs, and to pursue Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification on future projects