Going Green: Adding Eco-friendly Features to Property

By Norman Ebenstein

Norman Ebenstein is a professional retail developer. He is the president and chairman of the board of Capital Commercial Properties, a capacity in which he has served for over 40 years. Norman Ebenstein is credited with numerous improvements to the Eden Center, a nationally known shopping and cultural destination in Virginia.

A large number of shopping centers, apartment buildings, homes, and hotels have started to incorporate eco-friendly features in recent years. In addition to allaying environmental concerns, adding “green” features during a property renovation can help residential or commercial property seem more modern. Below are two simple ways to make a commercial or residential property greener.

1. Energy-efficient windows and skylights. Certain types of window frames and treatments can reduce heat gain during the hot seasons and heat loss during the cold seasons. This helps decrease heating and energy costs. Strategically placed skylights and picture windows can lessen the need for indoor lighting, further lowering energy requirements.

2. [Solar energy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar_energy%E2%80%8E) panels. Energy derived from solar panels reduces dependence on traditional energy sources and helps offset energy costs. Two studies, by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Bureau of Economic Research, have shown that, contrary to popular belief, installing solar panels adds value to California homes.