



Blue Ridge SuN is the monthly newsletter from the Sustainability Committee.

Going Green with a Living Roof

Perhaps your old roof is due for a reboot. Or maybe you're just interested in doing one more thing to improve the environment. Maybe it's time to consider adding a living roof (also known as a "green roof") to your home! A living roof is a structure that includes a moisture barrier, a drainage layer, a root barrier, a growing medium, and a variety of hardy plants (usually, but not always, sedums).



Top Ten Reasons to Get a Green Roof

Living roofs aren't just good for the environment—they're good for your budget as well! While initial installation costs may be higher for a living roof than for a traditional roof, there are a plethora of reasons why green roofs make good environmental and financial sense. Read on for the top ten reasons, below:

1. Reduction in energy costs. Green roofs have been shown to reduce heating and cooling loads on a building by 50-90%.
2. Lowering the "urban heat island effect." City temperatures are often four degrees higher than surrounding areas—green roofs are often 25-80 degrees cooler than similar buildings nearby.
3. Living roofs can last two to three times longer than a traditional asphalt shingle roof, saving you money over the long run.
4. Green roofs reduce storm water runoff.
5. They help filter pollutants out of the air and absorb carbon dioxide, reducing disease rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses.
6. They help filter pollutants and heavy metals out of rainwater to improve our water system.
7. (Speaking of "heavy metal"), they provide sound insulation since the soil acts to filter out lower frequencies and the plants block out higher frequencies.
8. They provide natural habitats for a variety of birds and insects (including bees, butterflies, and ladybugs).
9. They provide a way-station for migrating songbirds who may have difficulty locating green spaces in urban environments.
10. They're attractive, and they increase the quality of life for people living and working around them.

For More Information:

http://www.livingroofsinc.com/about_us?x=1

<http://livingroofs.org/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Living_roof