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Matt Weaver - Green Properties

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As a Realtor working with residential, commercial, and vacation property seekers, I'm asked more and more about what type of "green" features a property might have or can be adapted to have in making the living experience much more healthy and energy efficient. We've all heard in general about what a "green" home or business might be, but here are some current trends we're finding more and more in the consciousness of people looking for suitable "green" properties.

Energy efficiency is first and foremost for most people. While the majority of homes and business still use fossil fuels, which are very expensive at present, people are asking how they can supplement the existing systems with cost effective "green tech" solutions such as solar PV, solar hot water, wind turbines, geo-thermal, biofuel selections, and radiant heat for slab and below floor design features. Some are even having energy audits done to compare fossil fuel use to present day electricity use for full or supplemental heating. Using electric heat as a supplemental source, when combining solar PV and passive solar design, just might be getting close to becoming cost effective and perhaps the cleanest of all combinations. Having an energy audit done for your home or business is a good thing to do. It will help you decide what needs to be done first and help to bring the expense and cost savings forward for you to review. These energy audits can be a free service and will make "cents".

Secondly, is the home well insulated but at the same time is it allowed to breathe, so to speak. Meaning is there ventilation of some kind to allow stale air and any build up of interior building material toxins to move freely out of the building by introducing a percentage of fresh air into the space and allowing existing stale air to move out. Has the home been built with approved building materials that won't be a problem that creates a "sick building syndrome" or that can contribute to hap-hazard development issues for the overall community and environment.

People are becoming much more aware of the "Green Issues" which can bring wonderful value for the home, business, and rental property. The concepts of sustainability and restorative practices for communities are also becoming positive attributes of a community for people who are choosing a community to live, work, and play in.

Clean Edge's second annual U.S. Clean Energy Leadership Index, released May 20th, provides the industry's most comprehensive and objective analysis and ranking of how all 50 states, and the individuals, businesses, and organizations that operate there, compare across the clean energy spectrum.

According to Clean Energy's assessment and ranking of more than 70 different indicators in technology, policy, and capital, the top 10 states in the nation a California, Oregon, Mass., New York, Colorado, Washington, New Mexico, Minnesota, Connecticut, and Vermont. New England has a great start in this exploding sector of clean energy applications.

In Mass. we have many progressive organizations that can help people sift through the many issues

and decisions they will be making in finding a "green" community, home, or business opportunity.

Here's is a short list of websites available:

<http://www.mass.gov?pageID=eoeeahomepage&L=1&L0=Home&sid=Eoeea>

<http://www.masssave.com/>

<http://www.nesea.org/>

<http://www.solarhouse.com/>

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