Siding with the Environment

The green building movement is now mainstream and here to stay. Contrary to a common misperception, today's vinyl siding, the nation's most popular choice for exterior cladding, is being recognized for its environmentally friendly benefits.

Throughout the manufacturing process, on the home and even after it has fulfilled its useful life, vinyl siding scores well on tough environmental tests. The facts below show how vinyl siding sides with the environment. By including vinyl siding in your specifications, your community can too.

Source Reduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines source reduction as activities designed to reduce the volume or toxicity of waste generated in the first place, including the design and manufacture of products with minimum toxic content, minimum volume of material, and/or a longer useful life. The vinyl siding industry has embraced that concept and applies it to the various stages of the product lifecycle.

Vinyl siding uses minimal raw material in production, gaining strength and durability through its meticulously engineered design. Nearly all scrap and off-spec material is reprocessed into new vinyl products, meaning only finished products, and nearly zero waste, ever leave the manufacturing plant.

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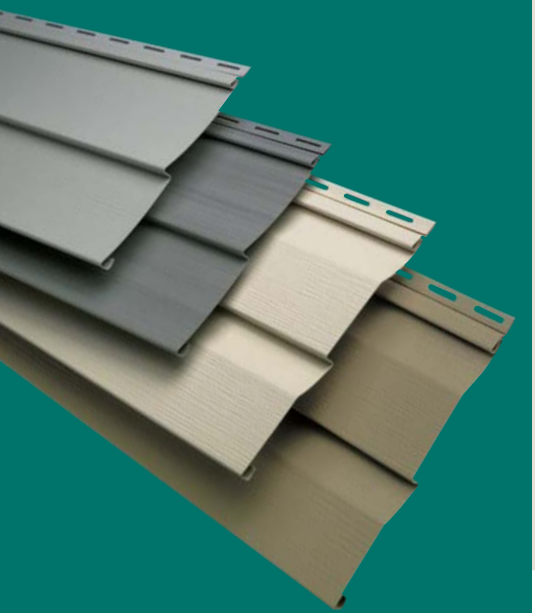
DID YOU KNOW?

According to Building for Environmental and Economic Sustainability (BEES) studies, vinyl siding is rated significantly better than brick and stucco for both economic and environmental performance. Vinyl siding is friendlier to the environment when considering factors such as air pollution caused by production, fossil fuel depletion and global warming impact.

It's Easy to See – Vinyl Siding is Green

The vinyl siding industry is keenly aware of its responsibility to the environment, and sometimes takes pride in lists it doesn't make. For example, the EPA benchmark report, "Characterization of Building-Related Construction and Demolition Debris in the United States," which lists the 36 typical constituents in the construction and demolition debris stream, does not include vinyl siding[3]. Simply put, vinyl siding that lasts a lifetime will do so on the house, not in the landfills.



A wall that is vinyl sided doesn't require potentially toxic paint, which saves the energy and resources needed to manufacture and dispose of them. Vinyl siding is also light, which keeps transportation costs down. — Green Builder, October 2006

Led by the Vinyl Siding Institute (VSI), the industry's commitment to ongoing contractor education means more efficient installations, resulting in less waste. The *VSI Certified Installer Program* includes a rigorous course of study and examination on the proper installation techniques for vinyl siding, soffit and accessories, based on the ASTM D4756 standard.

CERTIFIED™ VINYL SIDING INSTALLER VSI ASTM D4756 Sponsored by the Vinyl Siding Institute

Vinyl Siding on the Home

Because vinyl siding is easy to maintain, there is no need for paint, stain, caulk, etc., reducing toxins and maintenance-related substances in the solid waste stream. Cleaning and maintenance of vinyl siding only requires water, mild detergent and a soft cloth or soft-bristled brush.

Using vinyl siding reduces the strain on scarce natural resources, such as cedar and other wood. Combined with the long lifespan of vinyl (most manufacturers offer lifetime warranties) those economic and environmental resources are maximized.

Vinyl siding is an efficiently engineered cladding which results in a building product that is durable, while utilizing a minimum amount of materials in its manufacture.

Green building experts are aware of these facts and have recognized vinyl siding's value. The NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines[1] award four points in Section 2.1.5 for using building materials, including vinyl siding, that require no additional finish resources to complete application on site. James Hardie siding products must be painted and caulked, and special tools are needed for installation, along with a dust mask or respirator[2].

Innovations in the vinyl siding manufacturing process have resulted in the addition of a broad spectrum of colors for builders and homeowners to choose from – and whether the actual colors are barn reds or deep blues, or anything in between, they're all green. More information and research documentation on vinyl is available at **www.vinylinfo.org** and on vinyl siding at **www.vinylsiding.org**. The more you learn, the more you'll appreciate why green building sides with vinyl.

[1]NAHB Research Center, Inc. NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines. Version 1. Part 1. Section 2. Resource Efficiency. 2.1.5. December 13, 2004. [2]James Hardie Building Products Material Safety Data Sheet. [3]Franklin Associates. Characterization of Building-Related Construction and Demolition Debris in the United States (Report No. EPA530-R-98-010). (Table C-1). Prepared for The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. June 1998.

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For more information on why America Sides with Vinyl, visit www.vinylsiding.org.