

How green buildings can benefit the planet and your bottom line

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The phrase 'green building' is often associated with our interaction with the environment, responsible use of resources, reducing our carbon footprint, adopting eco-friendly habits and improving our quality of life. It is not only the planet that will benefit from green construction and the resource efficient operation of buildings - there are social and economic benefits to green building as well as the more obvious environmental benefits.



Source: liu fuyu © [123RF.com](#)

According to the World Green Building Council, “[Green buildings] provide some of the most effective means to achieving a range of global goals, such as addressing climate change, creating sustainable and thriving communities, and driving economic growth.”

Green building benefit 1: Reducing energy and water bills

Reducing energy costs is one of the most well-known benefits of green building. Renewable resources such as solar and wind power aren't always the most logical choices for lowering energy greenhouse gas emissions as they require an investment that might not be possible at the time. Complementing optimal building orientation by including energy efficiency features such as wall and roof insulation, LED lighting and effective fenestration will reduce the energy needed to heat and cool the building to a comfortable level.

Dual-flush toilets, low-flow taps and design, which encourages behavioural changes, cut water consumption and expenses.

Green building benefit 2: Reducing waste disposal costs

Affecting change to design and behaviour cuts the amount of waste that is generated and increases the percentage of the remaining waste that could be reused (upcycled) by others or recycled and composted.

Green building benefit 3: Reducing absenteeism and improving staff productivity

Various studies have shown that improved indoor environmental quality (IEQ) contributes to reductions in perceived absenteeism and work hours affected by asthma, respiratory allergies, depression and stress, and to self-reported improvements of productivity – these findings indicate that green buildings positively affect public health.

The aim is to make your workforce more effective. From a financial perspective, it makes sense to keep your staff happy, healthy and productive. The upfront investment in green building can often be offset by reduced utility bills, as well as the productivity gains resulting from healthier and more engaged staff force.



Green buildings can boost productivity, wellbeing and health of workers

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Green building benefit 4: Better staff retention and recruitment

Attractive workplaces with clean air, daylight and outdoor views make your staff (your most valuable asset) feel happier, more motivated and valued at work. All these things make staff more likely to enjoy their jobs and stay with the company, while also attracting others. According to an international study, many office workers say workplace design would influence their decision to work at a company.

Don't underestimate the importance of keeping your employees engaged and motivated – replacing a staff member can be costly due to recruitment expenses and loss of output while the new employee gets up to speed.

Green building benefit 5: Stay ahead of regulation

The long-term trend is for energy, water, waste and environmental regulations to get stricter as international environmental standards rise. Playing catch-up is costly and poses reputational and legal risks.

Green building benefit 6: Investor relations, branding and public relations

Environmental awareness is growing. By promoting green achievements in your marketing, you can increase customer loyalty, attract new customers and even please shareholders with the consequential increase in profits and the reduction in costs.

In conclusion, the financial benefits of 'green building' can be huge – benefiting the planet and your bottom line.

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