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TV Report



Going Green

SEATTLE (Ivanhoe Broadcast News) -- Seventy seven percent of Americans say they worry about the environment. Whether it's to help save the environment or to live in a healthier home, more Americans are switching to green products than ever before. From energy efficient office buildings to cork flooring in your kitchen, green has not only gone mainstream -- it's overflowing.

The bird food, the coffee, her newly remodeled house -- they're all eco-friendly. Christine Janikowski is living the green way. "We need to make sure we treat our planet respectfully," she says.

Janikowski's kitchen cabinets are Lyptus hardwood, a natural mixture of Eucalyptus grandis and E. urophylla grown in plantations that preserve the environment. Her stairs and upstairs flooring are bamboo. Downstairs it's cork. And the bathroom countertops are made from recycled paper products.

"What we were surprised about was the availability," she says.

Abby Mages, a manager at the Environmental Home Center in Seattle, says, "It's definitely hitting the mainstream." Products made from recycled content not only look great -- but also help to divert waste from landfills.

Cork flooring, made from the outer bark of an oak tree, is durable, provides acoustical and thermal insulation, cushions the foot, and is resistant to moisture and decay. Bamboo -- one of the fastest growing plants in the world -- is highly reusable. Even though it is a grass, it looks and behaves like a hardwood. Bamboo is 95-percent the hardness of Red Oak.

At her store, Mages says a hand-pounded copper sink made with recycled copper goes for \$376. And as America goes green, so does the paint. Low-odor, low-toxic latex paint is \$18 a gallon.

Going green is all about using building materials derived from renewable products, and now that green is affordable -- Janikowski says it's worth the price of saving the environment. She says her next eco-friendly goal is to learn about organic gardening.

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To give you an idea of the boom in green growth -- membership to the non-profit group United States Green Building Council (USGBC) has grown more than 1,000-percent in the past four years.

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