

FIRST GREEN BUILDING PERMITTED IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

The Moppel Residence, a home near Mount Woodson designed by Hubbell & Hubbell Architects, is the first green building to receive a building permit under San Diego County's new Green Building program. This program trims 15% off permitting costs and expedites the permitting process so that green buildings can move from the drawing board to the construction phase more quickly than conventional projects.

A variety of factors make a building "green." In general terms, green buildings are those that minimize their impact on the earth. Nonrenewable resources such as oil are used as little possible; energy efficiency and water conservation are maximized. Natural heating, cooling, lighting, ventilation, and recycled materials are used wherever possible. Public transportation and alternative fuels can also be incorporated into green projects.

The Moppel Residence's energy efficiency and use of reclaimed materials helped qualify it as a green building. Its walls are formed from straw bales, an agricultural waste product that would otherwise have to be destroyed. Straw bales create thick, naturally insulated walls that lower a building's heating and cooling costs. Dating back to the nineteenth century, straw bale construction has been enjoying a U.S. renaissance in recent years due to the increasing popularity of environmentally friendly products.