



Homes of Distinction, Built with Integrity



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How Cool Are You?



June has arrived and summer is just around the corner. Having already experienced some higher than normal temperatures here in the Bay Area (with even some records broken), it looks like this summer may be a hot one. With an energy demand spike created by our cooling system needs, I want to address an important green building issue. It is called the "heat island effect." This is where urban areas, through building surfaces and pavement, soak up heat during the day and then discharge it from afternoon and into the night. California's Mediterranean climate (long periods of warm & dry weather) can accentuate this environmental effect. Some studies have shown that

buildings and pavement can be 50-90 degrees hotter than the air temperature during the day. Further research shows that urban areas can be 5-20 degrees hotter than more rural outlying areas due to the "heat island effect."

So what does this mean for area homeowners? Generally, higher energy demand leads to price increases, increased pollution, and a negative impact on our air quality. Demanding more from our power plants while we churn out more carbon dioxide and other gases only increases the effects of global warming. General heat related health problems are a concern as well, particularly with children and the elderly.

For you, the long days of summer mean that the roof on your home will absorb large



Our staff members hold the following industry certifications:

- Certified Remodeler
- Certified Remodeling Carpenter
- Certified Lead Carpenter
- Certified Kitchen and Bath Remodeler
- Certified Green Building Professional

amounts of heat. Your living spaces will be harder to cool and your AC systems will need to run late into the night...hurting you in the wallet!

So what are the steps we can take to combat these problems in our communities and in our homes? At the city level, tree-lined streets can reduce heat absorbed by street pavement and more green space can cut down heat retention while also providing areas for recreation. "Smart" buildings that use intelligent layout and complex computer systems in their design can also help. By managing natural ventilation, solar exposure and energy monitoring these buildings can require much less energy while also being more comfortable.

At the residential level, recent advances in building materials are bringing us products that reflect more solar radiation, meaning they absorb less heat or can get rid of any heat more quickly. New "cool roofing" materials have the same appearance as traditional shingles or tiles, yet have significantly different solar performance. Painted coatings also have the potential to reflect more heat.



Going further, vegetative or "green" roofs are an even better answer. By using systems that can contain soil and plants on a roof, heat gain from solar radiation is virtually eliminated. Other vegetative roof benefits include better building insulation, reduced rain water run-off and the offering of green space to the local ecosystem (insects, birds, etc).

However you try and beat the heat this summer, try and visualize how nice a significant drop in your local temperatures and energy use would feel! Please call us here at Chris Donatelli Builders at (408)287-4886 to find out more about the ways we can help you stay cool in your home.

Home Maintenance Tip: Repair Your Walkway and Driveway

Cold weather is now behind us, but chances are it left its mark on your home. Spring's a great time to repair all cracked, broken or uneven driveways and walks to help provide a safe and level walking surface.

We hope you enjoyed our e-newsletter. Remember, you can use the link below to forward this to friends and family who might be interested, so they can sign up for it as well. Look for us again next month!

Chris

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