

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES for TERRAPIN GREEN HOMEOWNERS

When we designed TERRAPIN GREEN as Biddeford's first Energy Smart Conservation Development, one of our goals was to locate all of the new custom homes in as natural a setting as possible. With that in mind, we offer the following suggested guidelines for your consideration before, during and after construction:

1. An important consideration in energy smart home design is building size. A smaller, more compact home uses fewer materials to build and fewer resources to maintain. An energy smart building design will make efficient use of new materials and new technologies, energy efficient appliances, windows, doors, and mechanical systems, utilizing healthy, sustainable products and practices.
2. A well sited, well sealed, and well insulated energy smart home can reduce operating costs and protect you from the impact of rising fuel and energy prices. Building energy smart makes economic sense on an individual level while reducing dependence on imported energy resources makes sense for everyone. Local, State and Federal programs may offer tax rebates and incentives for some renewable energy options.
3. Home owners are asked to keep garage doors on the side or back of their homes so they are not the focal point in front. This creates a more aesthetic neighborhood view and allows for easier snow clearing. If this is not possible due to lot configuration, garage doors should be set back from the front facade. Roof pitches should be no less than 9/12 excluding dormers, balconies, sunrooms, porches, and such.
4. By building with zero or low VOC materials, you will keep your new home as toxic free as possible. An approved HVAC system can provide good ventilation to rid your home of stale air and excess moisture which is critical for good, healthy indoor air quality.
5. We recommend owners consider porous concrete or other pervious materials for driveways and walkways on individual lots. We ask you to minimize impervious surfaces to reduce runoff problems. We suggest the use of rain barrels to catch rainfall so you can reuse that water in gardening and other outside activities.
6. Respect and protect the natural landscape on your lot. Do not attempt to alter or fill in naturally occurring wetlands. Do not remove healthy trees. We strongly discourage the planting of common grass and encourage the use of no-mow and low-mow grasses. We encourage landscaping in keeping with your natural surroundings and the woodland-like native understory and ground layer vegetation in the forest.

7. When landscaping, take care to use only native and non-invasive species, and consider removing any invasive plants when found. Select a variety of native trees and shrubs for your home landscape. Practice xeriscaping. Planting evergreen on the north side of your home to block prevailing winds will help to reduce heating costs. Landscape with shade trees on the south and west sides to keep your home cool in summer and reduce the need for air conditioning.
8. Consider including different habitat types in your yard to give wildlife more space to live. Provide logs, rocks, and brush piles of branches and twigs as shelter for wildlife. Let leaves stay where they fall on all or part of your property. Try to avoid or minimize the use of pesticides and fertilizer, as these can be harmful to reptiles and amphibians and other wildlife. Discourage predators by making garbage and other food sources unavailable.
9. During peak reptile and amphibian spring breeding season (April to May) try to reduce light spillage from the use of security and garden lighting. Do not move reptiles and amphibians that you find in your backyard. A critter moved to a "better" spot can leave it vulnerable to predators. It can also make searching for food and shelter difficult for them. Enjoy wildlife where you find it, but do not attempt to keep wildlife as pets. It can be dangerous to you and the wildlife, and it may also be against the law.
10. You can minimize erosion by maintaining vegetation cover on steep slopes during your site clearing, grading, and construction activities. Minimize disturbed areas and protect buffer areas to the full extent practicable. Avoid and/or fill in ruts and other artificial depressions that hold water. If ruts are created, refill to grade as soon as possible.
11. Stagger silt fencing to avoid disrupting amphibian movements. Stabilize your disturbed areas as soon as possible and remove silt fencing no later than 30 days after stabilization. Whenever possible, we encourage all construction activities to take place outside the peak reptile and amphibian movement periods which include the early spring breeding and the late summer dispersal times.
12. At Terrapin Green, we encourage you to consider joining and supporting Blandings Park Wildlife Sanctuary or another conservation organization to learn more about how to live in harmony with and enjoy nature more.

Welcome to TERRAPIN GREEN ... we hope you'll share the dream!