

SPECIAL REPORT

GREEN REVOLUTION: *Using Alternative Energy in Today's Modern Times*

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

There's no denying that we humans are hard on our environment. Sometimes I wonder why so many of us treat the earth with such disdain. You can see morons pitch cigarette butts from their car windows on a daily basis, and some folks even toss fast food garbage to the ground like it's no concern of theirs. Where did these people come from? And more importantly, why don't they care about our phenomenal planet? There really aren't any others we can realistically inhabit. Unless you want to spend your days and nights completely indoors like on "Total Recall." No thanks! My point is that we have numerous environmental issues that require more attention than we're giving. It's time the world woke up, before there is no world at all.

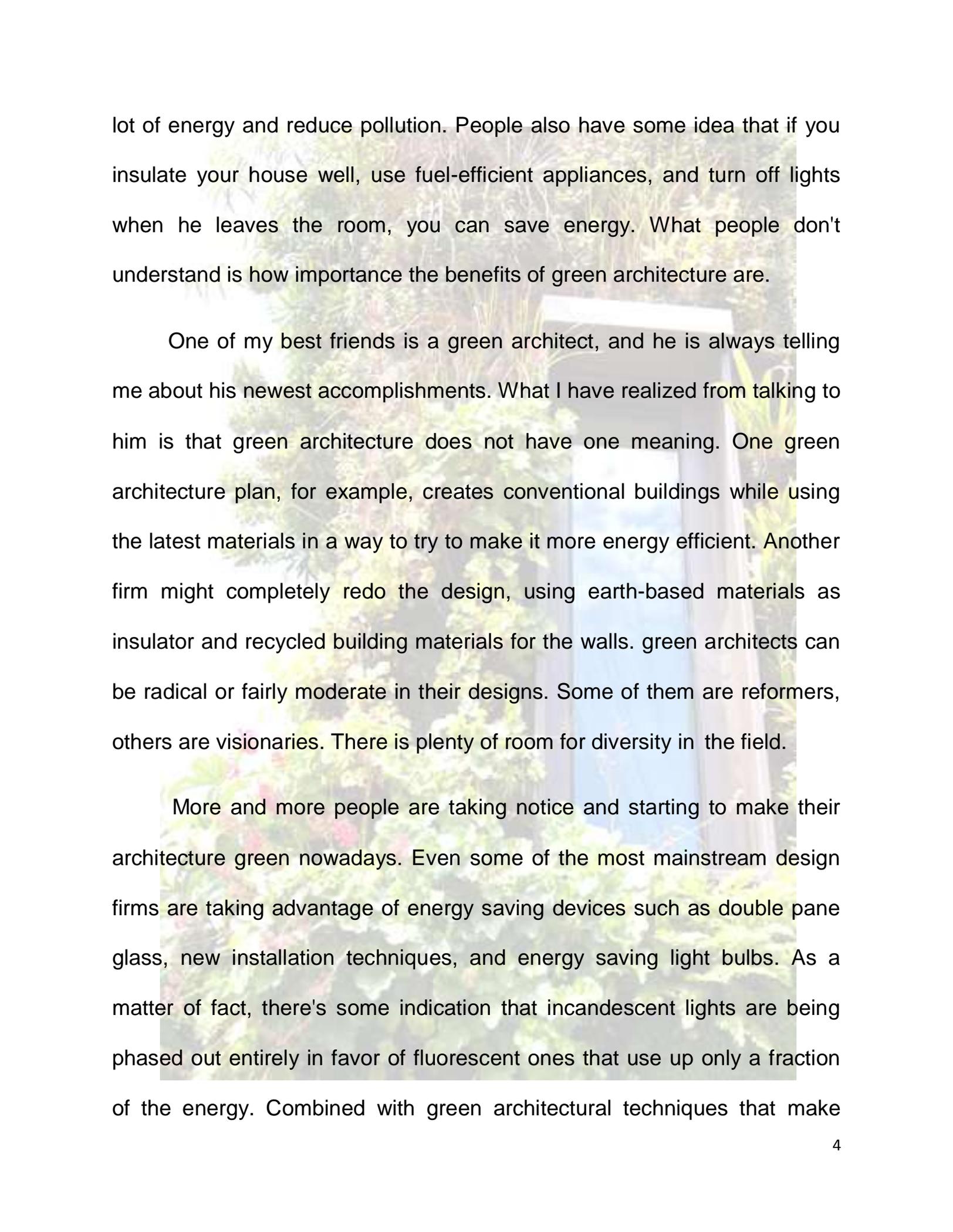
Granted there are countless environmental issues such as global warming, deforestation, the ozone layer, water pollution and animal extinction, but the one I want to discuss is plain old pollution. This is probably due to the fact that it's what I generally encounter. Day after day I spot litter bugs. And while I would like to have them deported, that's not a realistic option. I suppose the real dilemma at-hand is apathy. Far too many people just don't care. If you haven't already noticed, most individuals are

only concerned with what is theirs. If it is not in their possession and it doesn't affect them directly, they don't care. They have no reason to. Clearly this is very selfish, but it is the way people have become. The question is; how do we change this?

Well, as far as the pollution epidemic goes, I say this is one of the most common environmental issues that can be solved with stricter punishment. When all else fails, stronger negative reinforcement should do the trick. If a fine for littering is currently 250 dollars, make it 2500 dollars. Once a few people have to pay it, many people will be less likely to commit this crime. Yes I did say crime, because it's a crime on the planet. A victim who can't fight back. It's also likely that other environmental issues would be reduced through stronger punishment as well. Let's stand up for the world we live in. We only have one!

GREEN ARCHITECTURE

Green architecture and sustainable design have become buzzwords recently, but few people really understand the full importance of these concepts. The benefits of green architecture are generally known. Everyone knows, for example, that if you use local materials that are produced in a way that is not environmentally hazardous, you can save a



lot of energy and reduce pollution. People also have some idea that if you insulate your house well, use fuel-efficient appliances, and turn off lights when he leaves the room, you can save energy. What people don't understand is how importance the benefits of green architecture are.

One of my best friends is a green architect, and he is always telling me about his newest accomplishments. What I have realized from talking to him is that green architecture does not have one meaning. One green architecture plan, for example, creates conventional buildings while using the latest materials in a way to try to make it more energy efficient. Another firm might completely redo the design, using earth-based materials as insulator and recycled building materials for the walls. green architects can be radical or fairly moderate in their designs. Some of them are reformers, others are visionaries. There is plenty of room for diversity in the field.

More and more people are taking notice and starting to make their architecture green nowadays. Even some of the most mainstream design firms are taking advantage of energy saving devices such as double pane glass, new installation techniques, and energy saving light bulbs. As a matter of fact, there's some indication that incandescent lights are being phased out entirely in favor of fluorescent ones that use up only a fraction of the energy. Combined with green architectural techniques that make

buildings more insulated and take advantage of natural light to supplement artificial lighting, these developments may usher in a new era of energy efficiency.

Of course, green architecture alone isn't enough. We also need green urban planning. Cities need to be planned around keeping people as close together as possible and making transportation energy efficient. The typical modern urban sprawl is a thing of the past. The next cities of tomorrow will combine green architecture, efficient public transportation, and well thought out design to create viable communities where cars are almost entirely unnecessary. It may seem like a far cry from how things are, but it is possible. We are already taking the first strides as a society.

WIND TURBINE: A NEW SOURCE OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

A wind turbine is a device that converts kinetic energy from the wind into mechanical energy. If the mechanical energy is used to produce electricity, the device may be called a wind generator or wind charger. If the mechanical energy is used to drive machinery, such as for grinding grain or pumping water, the device is called a windmill or wind pump. Developed for over a millennium, today's wind turbines are manufactured in a range of vertical and horizontal axis types. The smallest turbines are used for

applications such as battery charging or auxiliary power on sailing boats; while large grid-connected arrays of turbines are becoming an increasingly large source of commercial electric power.

[\(\[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind turbine\]\(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind_turbine\)\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind_turbine)

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