

Real Estate

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Demand for Green Increasing

More and more office buildings are going green, with the installation of solar panels, fluorescent light bulbs and waterless urinals that are energy efficient and reduce pollution.

Mike Nishida, chief engineer with the Syska Hennessy Group, says many of his clients would like to go green in their buildings but can't afford the extra increase in construction costs of between 2% and 20%, according to the US Green Building Council.

"Most understand that they can save money in the long run, but they want to include features they can afford," Nishida says.



The Crystal Cathedral is a Syska project that optimizes the natural ventilation design for thermal comfort and energy efficiency.

Nishida, whose company worked on the Platinum-certified Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmentally friendly building in Santa Monica, adds that green building has gone beyond being a trend as cities have begun incorporating green guidelines into their building codes.

"In Santa Monica, you can't build unless you meet certain (green) requirements," he says. "In Los Angeles, most of the clients or potential clients I deal with want some sort of green building techniques incorporated into their project."

One of the more popular economically friendly features is a waterless urinal because, Nishida says, companies throughout Los Angeles are looking for ways to save water.

"We have installed them at companies in Los Angeles, Santa Monica and even in Santa Clarita," he says. "At JPL they have become standard in any new construction or remodel."—*Chris Sieroty*