

Buyer How To : Taking a Green Approach to Your Log Home Design

At Katahdin we've made a clear commitment to a green approach to building, not only because it makes sense, but because it helps our customers to save money over the long term. Taking a green approach can lower your expenditures, reduce your impact on the environment and provide a safer indoor environment by limiting exposure to mold and harmful substances. Designing with a green approach can work throughout many areas of the design process:

- **Figure your energy costs.** Much in the same way you figure the cost of your mortgage over its term, you need to compare your initial investment and long-term savings for energy. Sit down with your heating and cooling contractor to calculate the estimated cost of your energy consumption over the next twenty years, based on square footage, type of fuel, heating systems and initial cost of equipment. If you still have questions, Katahdin can help to calculate the energy savings for your individual home design, to give you a clearer picture of your savings over the long term.
- **Green and energy-efficient materials.** Constructing your log home with abundant and renewable Northern White Cedar is a great way to start down the green path. If you opt for the R-23 Energy Envelope insulation package, you'll further enhance your home's continuous insulation and cut your energy consumption dramatically.
- **Check Out the Benefits of Green Certification.** There are many approaches and programs for green certification available on a national, state and local level. In some areas of the country, utility companies may provide a percentage rate cut incentive for certification. A green certification provides your dealer and builder with a checklist of energy-saving features and standards that are assigned point values. To qualify for certification a threshold number of points must be reached. We've found that with very few alterations, Katahdin Cedar Log Homes qualify for many certification programs. The key here is to include certification in your plans from the very beginning. For a nominal fee a Certification Agent will work with your dealer to review plans for efficiency, monitor the building process and provide testing upon completion of construction. Very soon, green certification may add to the value of your home—many states now include green certification in appraisals.
- **Green Programs to Investigate.** Though the field of certification programs is growing with new demands for green building standards, once good place to start is the Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy (DSIRE). Here you'll find state by state incentives and rebates for homeowners. Another resource for energy efficiency is the Energy Star Qualified New Homes Program. Beyond its ratings for appliances, Energy Star also provides home efficiency ratings that may qualify you for beneficial energy rates. Other certification programs are being developed on a national and state-by-state basis including the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED for Homes and the National Association of Home Builders' National Green Building Program.

