

## Greening the MLS

The San Luis Obispo Association of REALTORS® was instrumental in the recent addition of green features in the **Central Coast Regional MLS** that serves the area from San Miguel to Santa Ynez . Your agent can now search MLS listings for residential property with a range of green features. Just ask!

## What's That?

Like any topic, “green” matters are associated with a growing flock of acronyms, words, phrases and certifications that may seem obscure. Been there? Here's HELP!

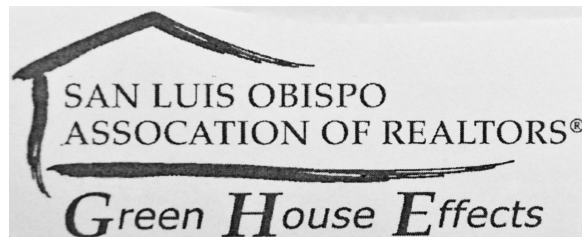
[www.thegreenguide.com/glossary](http://www.thegreenguide.com/glossary)



# Thanks!

for taking a few minutes to read this brochure and think about how the messages relate to your future housing decisions. If you have suggestions for the next edition or want to share green ideas and tips of your own, email us at:

[LSmith@slorealtors.org](mailto:LSmith@slorealtors.org)



## Feeling Green

The intuitive feelings created by curb appeal, diverse visual cues and assorted threads of primal resonance are key factors in choosing a house to buy or rent. In contrast, most “green” features aren't readily apparent in a quick drive by, or even a typical showing.



Thoughtful buyers or renters aware of total living expense (money, time and carbon), consider a range of “green” attributes when making their final housing decision.

That singular feel certain adorable houses engender remains important, but the overall experience of living in a house is so much more than a series of visual impressions.

Balancing a diverse array of housing characteristics in tune with an enlightened understanding of our planet's future as a human habitat is a challenge worth taking!

*This brochure provides ideas to use in selecting a house that yields pride on many levels.*

## How green is your

### *Location, Location, Location?*

Before looking at specific houses consider distance from different communities and neighborhoods to work, schools, recreation, shopping, family, friends, etc. Money, time and carbon footprint are strongly influenced by distance. Compare overall living expenses including the distance effect. Cheaper housing doesn't always mean cheaper overall living expenses.

### *Size Does Matter!*

The larger the home, the larger the energy costs, up to 50% increase for a home 2X as big, plus the embodied energy in the structural materials is greater. Look for efficient designs that put the space where you need it.

Parcel size is also a factor in water and energy use, not to mention time spent in maintenance. Energy efficient native landscaping is available, but at a cost proportional to lot size.

*Now you're ready to consider specific houses -- with new priorities.*

## How Green Is IT?

Home inspections are important, but they don't focus on green features.

An **Energy Audit** lets you know present energy efficiencies, or lack of same, and suggests the most effective future upgrades.

Other homes have a green certification already, LEED, EnergyStar and other ratings. See the links to learn more and discover the many ways energy efficiency is achieved.

### *Older Can Be Wiser!*

Older homes can be prime candidates for transformation. Structural materials are in place, reducing embodied energy, and upgrades can create significant increases in energy efficiency. Combining central location and often modest size, a mature house can represent a sound platform for a bright green future!

### *Green Pays*

Beyond saving money, time and carbon, "green" houses are eligible for special financing through Energy Efficient Mortgages (EEM) for purchase or refi), plus there are tax credits and rebates available.

## Everything Counts!

The planet needs our help to sustain our habitat. Big measures are great, but little actions count too.

Replace bulbs with CFLs or LEDs. Recycle and shop thrift stores. Buy products or materials produced locally. Use natural, renewable materials or fibers if possible. Be aware of VOCs in paint, fabrics and household products.

When replacing appliances look for EnergyStar rated models.

### *Green Links*

*Here are green links to add further detail to your house search and suggest ways to reduce your carbon footprint.*

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

[www.greenresourcecouncil.org](http://www.greenresourcecouncil.org)

[www.slogreenbuild.org](http://www.slogreenbuild.org)

[www.slogreenbusiness.com](http://www.slogreenbusiness.com)

[www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

[www.energy.ca.gov](http://www.energy.ca.gov)

[www.cheers.org](http://www.cheers.org)

[www.greenhomeguide.com](http://www.greenhomeguide.com)

