

NEWSLEAK

The leading resource for news and information within the decorative plumbing and hardware industry




SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
IS A CORPORATE
RESPONSIBILITY

COLONIAL BRONZE MAKES
A STRONG BUSINESS CASE
FOR GOING GREEN

SELLING GREEN
CAN HELP THE
EARTH AND YOUR
BOTTOM LINE

Prst Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Oak Brook, IL
Permit No. 100

Linda Jennings
Jennings & Company
436 Woodland Drive
Sarasota, FL 34234-3772



THE GREEN REPORT:

How Sustainability Impacts the Luxury Decorative Kitchen and Bath Market

By Linda Jennings



The Stainless Steel Elliptical Soaking Bath (top) from Diamond Spas is made from recycled sheet metal and features a bamboo skirting. A slipper tub for the 21st century, the Amalfi, by Victoria & Albert (middle), is crafted from 100 percent ENGLISHCAST™, a blend of volcanic limestone and high performance resins. The ECO-friendly bamboo bath sinks from LENOVA (bottom) are available in a variety of cool shapes and sizes.

Sustainability is not a trend but a new way of living. More and more consumers are seeking ways to reduce negative impacts on the environment, and their product purchases are reflecting this forethought. They are educated and very conscientious. But they also have impeccable taste and high design standards...so it's no longer enough to just go green.

To keep up with the diverse offerings in the marketplace and the growing sophistication of the green buyer, products today need to have a serious design edge when it comes to sustainability. It's all about rethinking green — kicking it up a notch and giving the consumer luxury choices. The result is a new wave of eco products that are extremely creative and will surely have consumers green with envy.

A number of leading DPHA manufacturers are experimenting with mixed sustainable materials like the striking Elliptical soaking bath, which combines stainless steel with bamboo pole skirting for an eclectic look rooted in texture and style. Unlike many other engineered materials, the stainless steel vessel shell is 100 percent recyclable without degradation making it fully “sustainable” and a true champion for the environment.

Bamboo sinks are also getting sophisticated with new shapes and sizes. Featuring organic warmth and natural beauty, these surprisingly durable sinks can easily withstand the rigors of daily use. Known for its peak density, color clarity and sustainability, bamboo is an

undeniably green product that fits naturally into both the kitchen and bathroom environments. Products made from this renewable resource are a fabulous way to combine responsible living with fashionable style. It's green with a creative twist.

Leading tub companies are turning to volcanic limestone mixes to create minimalistic styles that are sustainable. As a result, there is a new wave of seamless egg-shaped organic baths that excel in modern design with contoured bottoms and clean, sleek lines. As the stone-rich alternative to both cast iron and acrylic, the tubs are cast in one seamless piece that won't crack or flex. The high-performance materials are naturally insulating, durable and stain resistant. The tub is warm to the touch, water stays warm longer and there are no nasty cold shocks when getting into the tub.

The building industry is advancing to a new level of sustainable awareness and bath manufacturers are meeting those needs with tubs that are superior in design. Ecology-minded manufacturers are shipping the baths in recycled cardboard on pallets made of reclaimed wood, with strapping made from recycled bottles.

Other designers are reclaiming stainless steel and copper to craft freestanding bathing vessels and door pulls with fabulous high-end design results. Metal delivers superb quality and durability, guaranteeing no boundaries when it comes to design requirements. This allows engineering teams the flexibility to create the

industry's most design-savvy products the market has to offer.

Even customizable vanities and bath storage furniture have gone stylish and are offered in materials that minimize pollution, conserve energy and reduce waste. Sustainable woods like Clear Carmelized Bamboo, an architectural plywood made from 100 percent rapidly renewable bamboo, provide green options in cutting-edge vanity designs. Lyptus hardwood products are also an excellent option when selecting an exotic species grown to sustainable forest certification standards. Lyptus offers all the benefits of a tropical hardwood but is eco-friendly.

As concern for the Earth has clearly become a key issue with consumers, designers are heeding the call. Some companies will even custom create door hardware on request to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards, the rating system devised by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC).

More and more products are created from natural materials. Leather has made a huge comeback as renewable materials in organic forms fuse to create eco-friendly kitchen and bath products. Employing organic materials, quality construction and timeless design are keys to offering smart, ultra-luxe and green products that consumers are craving.

Sustainable design is here to stay. It's not a passing phase. It's a revolution!

According to The American Society of Interior Design (ASID), "Clearly we are on our way toward adopting sustainability on all levels of our projects, our businesses, our lives — something is happening and it's both an exciting and challenging opportunity for our industry. Individuals and business leaders are making decisions everyday that support the economy and lighten their environmental footprint toward attaining sustainable results."

The consumer has evolved when it comes to green living. And so manufacturers really have to raise the bar when it comes to design. It's not enough to just be green — products have to be delicious! ●

Victoria & Albert Bath Showcased in the First FreeGreen Showcase Home



The FreeGreen Green Home project in Needham, Mass., is a perfect testament to the fact that tradition and green can work together. Victoria & Albert, Mount Pleasant, S.C., was delighted to be a part of this project, which promotes green construction practices. Its York tub was featured in the master bath and the project shows that a traditional New England home can go green.

FreeGreen is a custom architecture firm that specializes in eco-friendly house plans. By partnering with select manufacturers and contractors, the company creates custom residential floor plans that are up to 55 percent more energy efficient than traditional homes. These plans are made available online at no charge in an effort to promote green building practices.

Chosen for its pleasing proportions, easy transitional style and freestanding design without feet, the York tub was a natural fit in this eco-friendly design project, which highlights the latest in green building practices and products. Like all Victoria & Albert tubs, the York is inherently energy efficient thanks to its ENGLISHCAST™ composition of a finely ground volcanic limestone mixed with resin. Cast in one seamless piece, this high-performance material is naturally insulating, durable and stain resistant so water stays warm for longer with less topping up and there are no nasty cold shocks when getting into the tub.

Designers at FreeGreen were particularly impressed with the York's manageable size — deep and roomy enough to be luxurious but not so big as to waste water and energy. Another plus on the eco-friendly front: Victoria & Albert tubs are lighter for easier transportation and installation, and they are shipped in recycled cardboard on pallets made of reclaimed wood with strapping made from recycled bottles.

While most green homes tend to lean toward modern the FreeGreen home in Needham demonstrates that green can go traditional. And its hoped that this project will serve as an inspiration for builders of all home styles to make the move toward green and incorporate green principles and products that are better for the environment.

To find out more about this project, follow the online blog at www.freegreen.com.



Linda Jennings is president of Jennings & Company — a public relations, advertising and marketing agency, specializing exclusively in the decorative plumbing and luxury hardware industry. Throughout a 20-year tenure, she has worked with the most significant editors and journalists in the consumer home market, identifying trends and providing newsworthy products. Based in Sarasota, Fla., her agency represents the most progressive manufacturers in the kitchen and bath industry. Jennings is a member of the DPHA.