

Eco-Living Condo Buildings

Condo living offers an opportunity to make a profound impact on the environment

When you live in a condo, you have a unique opportunity to make a huge, combined impact on your environment. We look at a number of Canadian condo communities who are implementing green initiatives, reducing their carbon footprint and moving to sustainability.

Roof Gardens

Condo-dwellers can look forward to greener pastures by installing roof gardens like those on [Dundas Square Gardens](#) in Toronto. These small oases provide a welcome reprieve from the concrete jungle, a habitats for birds and bees and some residents even grow vegetables for truly local organic fare.

You can install rooftop gardens without enormous initial investment using [container gardening](#) techniques.

Renewable Energy

Geothermal and solar energy go a long way to reducing the carbon footprint of a condo building. [Ironstone Condominiums](#) in Burlington, Ontario provide full geothermal heating and cooling to the entire building. Geothermal energy works by tapping into the earth's stable temperature to heat homes in winter and cool them in summer.

Vancouver Island's [Central Park Strata](#) condo building just got a green makeover when residents paid to install a solar array on the roof of the building. Most condo roofs are perfect for solar installations as they are flat and devoid of shade.

Not only can renewable energy sources reduce the carbon footprint of the building and the residents' hydro bills, they can also earn income for the building if they produce more energy than the building consumes.

Net-Zero Condos

The ultimate in green-living condos, the net-zero buildings generate as much energy as they consume. This is achieved through a combination of renewable energy generation and energy conservation. The [GreenLife West-Side condo project in Milton](#) boasts both solar arrays and a wind farm that will actually generate an excess of energy. When it is sold to the local grid, the renewable energy will fetch an income of \$230, 000 annually which the condo board can utilize as it sees fit.

Other Ways to Go Green

- Install recycling bins in a convenient place to encourage residents to recycle their waste.
- Start a ride-share system so commuters who are travelling to the same areas reduce the carbon footprint of their commute.
- Install bicycle racks which are conveniently located so that residents are encouraged to own and use bicycles.

- Have regular clothing and toy swaps where residents can bring gently used clothing and toys they no longer need and swap them to reduce the need to buy new items.
- Start a tool, book and kitchen library so residents can share tools, appliances and reading materials rather than buy their own.

If you have the space, start a tool and kitchen library so that large appliances, tools and ladders can be shared among residents rather than each household buying their own.

When your condo is due for regular maintenance, choose eco-friendly building and cleaning products with low VOC's for an environment that is healthier for you and better for the environment.

Switch out your building's light bulbs for energy-efficient CFLs and save money. Get a guide to green lighting [here](#).

Source URL (modified on 01/14/2016 - 09:52):

<http://ecoliving.scotiabank.com/eco-living-condo-buildings/876>