

# THE EMERALD CITY

Forget free concierge and car service—eco-friendly amenities are becoming the must-have perks du jour.

by Lois Weiss

**GREEN GOODS AND GADGETS** are making life in apartments, homes, and offices throughout Manhattan better all around, environmentally speaking. More building projects are going the earth-friendly route because of government mandates as well as commitments by architects and manufacturers to create and use items that will make living easier, now and in the future.

## THEY DO WINDOWS

High-quality air-filtering systems, coated windows, lighting that automatically adjusts to the brightness of the sky, and systems that use recy-

## DON'T THROW THE BABY OUT WITH THE BLACKWATER

One innovation that makes some wrinkle their noses is the use of “blackwater.” Graywater is water from sinks and showers that’s treated and used to water lawns. Blackwater, on the other hand, comes from toilet flushing. “They treat it, separate it, and it goes back,” explains Giammarella. And where does it go back to? Why, to toilet tanks, of course. “There’s a tremendous savings on water because it’s constantly being reused,” he adds.

You definitely don’t want your toothbrush falling in there.

Riverhouse at One Rockefeller Park, also a Battery Park City project, will have a roof garden of plants, trees, fruit, grasses, and shrubs that will cover 75 percent of its surface. It will also maintain apartment-temperature levels with the first-ever residential triple-glass exterior. And a “standing column geothermal well” will channel the stable temperature of the earth and deep groundwater (more than 250 feet below the surface) to provide heating and cooling for the lobby areas.

Another green roof is being planted Downtown at 255 Hudson, a project now being developed by Apollo Real Estate with Metropolitan Housing Partners.

Extell Development’s building at 86th Street and Lexington Avenue, designed by Cook + Fox, will be the Upper East Side’s first LEED-certified green building. (And to help keep your body “green” as well, amenities will include a La Palestra Fitness Center and Spa.)



clered water to hydrate lawns and even flush toilets are among the most commonly found devices.

Due to legislation enacted by former Governor George Pataki, all new buildings in Battery Park City are being built to a green standard. For example, the new Tower Residences being constructed by Millennium Partners will be partially fueled by solar panels on the roof, according to John Giammarella, president of construction for Gotham Construction. “Technology for solar panels is improving every day,” says Giammarella.

## INTO THE FOREST

The Tower Residences project will also save energy due to the use of newer ballasts for fluorescent lighting and energy-efficient appliances; additionally, it will incorporate renewable woods from forests that are certified for their stewardship of dwindling resources. Bamboo is a new architectural green favorite because its slender reeds grow tremendously fast and are flexible and sturdy enough for furniture and flooring. Poplar is another popular wood.

## A FIRM HAND IS NEEDED

The green trend is even extending beyond construction. Janitorial and maintenance company Guardian Service Industries has just become the first totally green cleaning company in its field. The switch involved retraining staff, introducing new equipment and chemicals, and implementing safe packaging and shipping of green-seal certified products. “We decided to go green because it’s the right thing to do,” says Guardian CEO Sandy Herzfeld, “and this is the right time to do it.”

Now being “green cleaned” are L&L Holding Company’s 195 Broadway, and all of Jack Resnick & Sons’ Manhattan office buildings, including 110 East 59th Street, 880 Third Avenue, 485 Madison Avenue, 75 Park Place, and 199 Water Street.

In addition to using cleaning materials that don’t give off those gaseous “new building” odors that often come from items like formaldehyde glues, green buildings also use a great deal of recycled content in everything from carpeting to kitchen cabinets, says Giammarella. Even the beautiful, colorful glass tiles used in many of the new projects are typically made from the same bottles you grudgingly drag back to the supermarket or separate and put out on recycling day.

Personally, I’m waiting to see who comes up with Polartec carpeting. [G]