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Innovative kitchen and bath designs draw inspiration from a variety of influences.

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Environmental concerns and rising energy costs are driving an increasing number of homeowners toward green remodeling.



High-performance 'green' home

By Stefanie Forney

World of Homes Editor

Sustainability is a hot topic today as green building practices are gaining momentum.

Architect Shelby Navarro and builder Micky Payne have combined their expertise to construct two impressive LEED-certified lofts on Rockford Avenue north of Cherry Street.

"LEED, a government rating system which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, judges the sustainability of residential and commercial buildings," said Navarro.

LEED promotes a whole-building sustainability strategy by recognizing performance in five vital areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and in-

door environmental quality.

The levels of certification range from silver to gold to platinum, which is the highest. According to Navarro, Tulsa Loft Project's two lofts are 15 points above platinum.

"We call this the NINE project. NINE is an acronym which stands for New Inspiration for Natural Environment," he said.

"I've been doing sustainability for a long time," said Navarro. "With this project, I wanted to showcase where everything is going and what can be done in the realm of urban design and neighborhood-friendly design in a walkable neighborhood — everything from the sustainable side to healthy interiors with no VOC paints and finishes so there aren't a lot of poisons inside. Oftentimes, the inside of a home is four times more polluted than the outside."

From the exterior, made of cedar,

Corten steel and stucco to the recycled products used in the interior, these homes are built to last.

The low maintenance exterior is naturally mildew and insect resistant.

Energy-saving features include geothermal climate control that is 70 percent more efficient than standard heating and cooling systems. Structural insulated panels used in the lofts are three times stronger than normal stud-frame construction.

A "green roof" with grass for a roof garden extends the life of the roof, reduces runoff, filters storm water and keeps the roof and home cooler while providing a refuge for urban wildlife.

"The difference between a roof with grass and one without grass is about 80 degrees in the summer," said Navarro. "It's a nice system. Many cities have adopted ordinances to



Top: A Zen garden tucked under the stairs is an attractive feature on the main level.

Inset: Kitchen countertops are recycled paper. They feel like concrete and look like soapstone.

encourage them like Chicago. Germany has them all over the place."

The open stairwell leading to the garden is a multipurpose space with an outdoor shower, perfect for cleaning up before going back inside

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