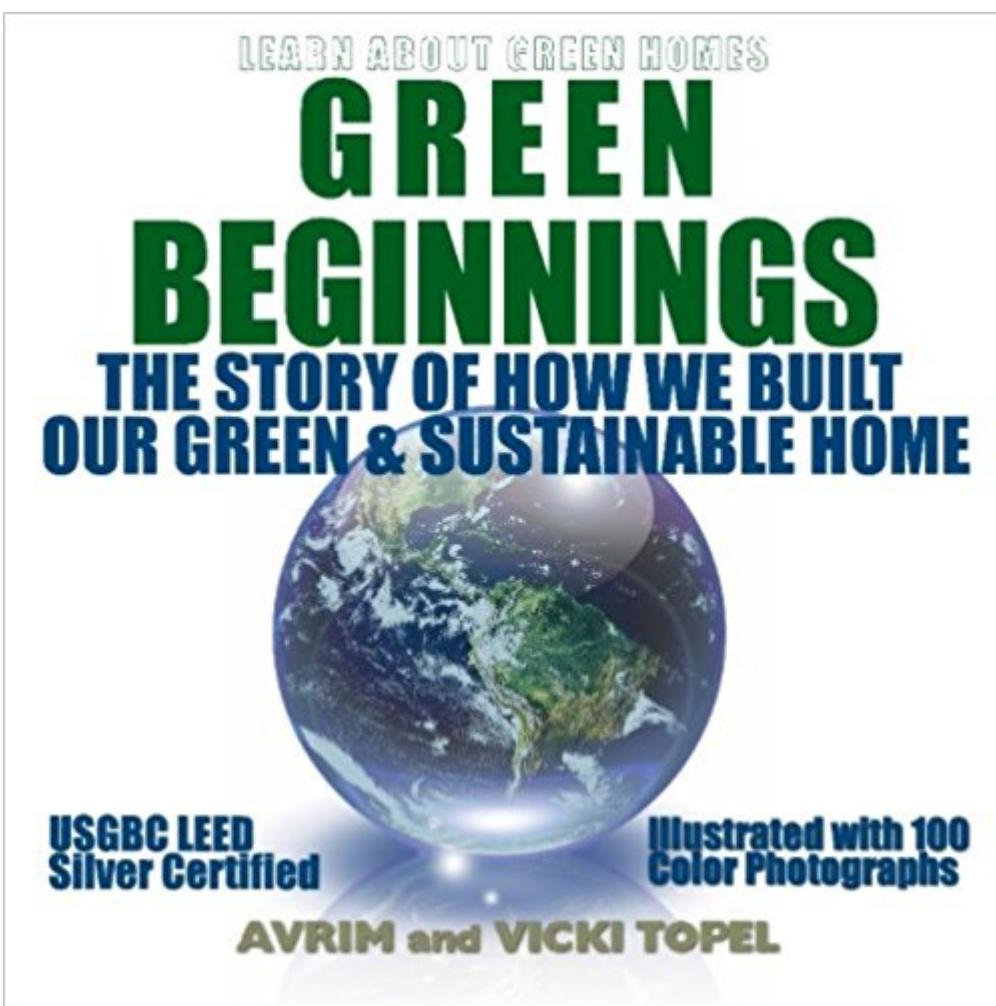


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# Green Beginnings: The Story Of How We Built Our Green & Sustainable Home



## Synopsis

This book is the first of itsâ™ kind to present the subject matter both experientially and from a homeownerâ™s perspective. Using non-technical, easy-to-understand, plain English, the authors identify and define green and sustainable concepts, materials and systems, and explain how these various components come together and relate to each other in todayâ™s green homes. Their homespun narrative style of storytelling makes readers feel as though they are conversing with two old friends and simplifies learning and comprehension. Following the projects timeline, the authors inject experiential advice at key planning and construction phases when applicable. Topics include selecting architects, builders and other professionals, the LEED For Homes program, and cite the benefits green homes avail homeowners. Construction activities are illustrated with 100 sequenced color photographs, and a glossary of green and sustainable terms and language provides the reader with a reference guide.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Finally, a simple green guide written by someone who's been there. GREEN BEGINNINGS is a delightful departure from difficult-to-understand construction books. Written in plain English, Ave and Vicki guide homeowners in ways to work with architects and builders on their new green home"

--Amy Cornelius, Green Builder/Construction Manager Hugh Lofting Timber Frames "GREEN BEGINNINGS provides a common sense and meaningful approach to understanding green homes for the newcomer and professional alike. Sequenced photography takes the guesswork out of the

equation and fulfills the readers expectations completely. I highly recommend this book to anyone seeking entry into this new and rewarding way of homebuilding." --Matthew Moger, AIA, Lyman Perry Architects" A story and a lesson, brilliantly crafted, easily understood, and documented with photography. Avrim and Vicki Topel have created a simple approach to teaching the essence of green homes for everyman." --Tad Radzinsky, P.E., LEED AP President, Sustainable Solutions Corporation

Vicki and Avrim Topel are a middle-class couple who describe themselves as not different from thousands of other American couples with children. They share the same lifestyle as their neighbors, with similar goals and dreams, and consider themselves blessed with family, friends, and a good life. Vicki Topel has a BS in Education from the University of Delaware and taught elementary school before making the decision to stay home and raise her children. A physical fitness fanatic, Vicki has consistently worked out at various health clubs and YMCA's and has non-competitively participated in running races on a regular basis for more than thirty years. Avrim Topel, also a University of Delaware grad with a BA in History, has spent the past thirty-three years in the hotel and real estate businesses. In addition to owning and managing hotels and other commercial real estate, he served on various advisory committees and boards for ITT Sheraton Corporation and Best Western International, Inc. He is also an artist, having been featured in two one-man shows in Delaware and Pennsylvania, and enjoys song writing as a hobby. Vicki and Avrim Topel reside in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, and Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, and have two children, daughter Cory, son Andrew, a Tibetan terrier, Lulu, and Siberian kitty, Katina. Learning about and building a green and sustainable home was a life changing event for homeowner-authors Avrim and Vicki Topel. Today, the couple is committed to helping others understand the concepts behind green and sustainable living. They reside in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania and Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

Many thanks to this husband and wife team for sharing their experience. I feel like I went along with them for the journey of a lifetime in designing and building a green and sustainable home. I have to admit, although I've read plenty of magazine and newspaper articles about Green Homes, I've been reluctant to pick up a book on the subject because the only ones I've been able to find are more like complicated technical manuals which admittedly intimidate me. Green Beginnings seemed more friendly to me since it was written by actual home owners, like me. What a surprise to find out that this HOW TO book reads more like a story... and a fun story at that. I particularly like how they pulled

their whole team together and I've already looked up several of their sub contractors and product lines on line for more information. I also appreciated the practical tips offered "in hindsight" and the fact that the basic terms involved in the world of "Green and Sustainable" now make total sense to me for the first time. Although I'm not quite ready to start building my own Green and Sustainable home, I'm certainly more prepared to start the process of where, when and how I'll go about it when I am ready. I highly recommend this book to ANYONE who is interested in lowering their home and living expenses and I'm going to provide several copies to our local school libraries here in Pennsylvania - not only is this the perfect MUST READ book for anyone considering building a Green and Sustainable home, Green Beginnings should be required reading for all high schoolers since it's clearly the way of the future. Hats off (made of natural fibers, of course) to Avrim and Vicki Topel for an easy to read book on a sometimes hard to understand subject matter.

I read this book over the weekend. This is an extremely helpful book for people who want to start building their own "green" house. The authors thoughtfully went from A to Z on what you need to do and what not to do when considering this daunting task. I recommend this book highly. Regards Scot Brewer Chadds Ford Pa.

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