



Passive Solar Architecture: Heating, Cooling, Ventilation, Daylighting, and More Using Natural Flows, by David A. Bainbridge and Ken Haggard, Chelsea Green Publishing, hardcover, \$85.

The push to “go green” in the home-building world has increased in recent years, which, many would agree, is a good thing. The current issue at hand, however, according to David A. Bainbridge and Ken Haggard in their new book *Passive Solar Architecture: Heating, Cooling, Ventilation, Daylighting, and More Using Natural Flow*, is that the movement hasn’t gone far enough.

“While more green buildings are being built,” the authors write, “they are only pale green and often perform little better than the buildings they replace, for they often neglect the most elementary feature of sustainable design: using the sun and climate resources for heating and cooling.” With this focus in mind, Bainbridge and Haggard—both solar pioneers who met in the 1970s while working at passive solar hot spots at the University of California—Davis and in

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San Luis Obispo, respectively—seek to provide readers with a comprehensive introduction and guide to passive solar architecture.

Using numerous photographs, charts, and other graphics (including illustrated characters named Oily Wasteful Wolf and Practical Passive Pig), Bainbridge and Haggard take readers—intended to be builders, designers, architects, and the like, as well as homeowners—through the steps required for sustainable design. In chapter one, the authors emphasize that orienting a building to the sun—i.e., facing the equator, which is south for the Northern Hemisphere and north for the Southern Hemisphere) is key to passive building, and that not doing so is “the most common failing of building design.” (Indeed, the authors note, passive design centers on using architectural means, rather than mechanical ones, to activate on-site energy sources to condition a building’s interior.)

Bainbridge and Haggard cover specifics such as building metabolism, traditional and new building materials, the importance of place (from our location within the biosphere to the site of the building construction), microclimate matters, and much more before turning to what they note is the heart of the book: the chapters on passive heating, passive cooling and ventilation, and natural lighting. Here the authors provide the basics behind these principles, as well as explanations and illustrations of how to execute and maintain such systems.

The book concludes with information on how to harvest on-

site resources, essays written by the authors and a handful of their peers, and helpful appendixes that include a tool kit for building evaluation and suggested further reading.

Throughout the text, the authors—with their often passionate prose, as well as a wealth of technical, contextual, and historical detail—write compellingly about the importance of passive solar architecture, the need to understand the dynamic and interconnected nature of green building, and the attainability of affordable and enjoyable sustainable living.

—Amy Hegarty



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