

Business Profile

Greening Homes Creates Beautiful and Environmentally Friendly Renovations

By Eileen Hoftyzer



**Chris Phillips MBS, LEED AP, President
Greening Homes Ltd.**
1543A Bloor Street West,
Toronto, ON M6P 1A5
Phone: 416-532-6811
cphillips@greeninghomes.com



Chris Phillips, owner of Greening Homes, approaches his business the same way he approaches other aspects of his life: with a focus on minimizing environmental impact, building community and behaving ethically.

Greening Homes is a renovations and building company that focuses on being environmentally responsible, from selecting supplies with lower carbon emissions, minimizing trips to the landfill, avoiding toxic products and ensuring high indoor air quality. They specialize in renovating and updating the old brick homes found in downtown Toronto.

“Our mandate is to minimize environmental impact in an industry that is often wasteful and archaic,” he says. “The business is run with ethics and transparency in mind, and we use best building practices to make change within the industry.”

Chris, who had a Master’s degree in Ethics before starting the business in 2007, retrained in the field with a Certificate in Sustainable Building and Design at Fleming College, followed by a Master’s degree in Building Science from Ryerson University. The company now has a team of 20 people, including a team of carpenters who are all trained in better building practices, as well as project managers. They typically work on several projects at any given time.

While some of Greening Homes’ clients seek them out because of their environmental philosophy, Chris says that many clients come to them because of their generally excellent reputation and aren’t necessarily particularly interested in a green home.

“We show them that we can make changes to the project that don’t impact budget and create a beautiful project,” he says. “The biggest triumph is when we create a report showing the environmental impact to show the clients, and they become converts to the idea.”

Chris explains that building or renovating in an environmentally sustainable way does not



Chris Phillips and his fold-up bike, which he rides through all four seasons.

necessarily cost more than traditional renovations. Using concrete with lower carbon impact and lead-free brass fittings, for example, costs the same compared to traditional materials, but with a lower environmental impact.

“There are many opportunities to make a difference in the industry through small changes,” he says. “There are changes with little or zero cost that clients may not be aware of that builders can make on their own, and these are areas where we can be leaders.”

Chris is seen as an expert in the field, having taught the green building course as part of George Brown College’s Renovation Technician programme for the past three years, as well as giving guest lectures at the University of Toronto and Ryerson University.

Since Greening Homes includes ethics and community as part of its mandate, giving back to the community is a priority for Chris and the company. His team built the “Stop Gap” accessibility ramps found in front of many of the stores in the neighbourhood, and his team stepped in to volunteer with Mike Holmes to rebuild the High Park Adventure Playground after it was burned down several years ago.

For Chris, it’s natural to give back to a community that is so important to him. Chris grew up in the High Park area and still lives there with his family, and it’s where the business is based. “We’re part of the community, and giving back is an extension of the business,” he says.

Greening Homes is located at 1543 Bloor St. W., steps from Dundas West Station. For more information, visit www.greeninghomes.com or call 416-532-6811.



Chris and his sons live in the High Park neighbourhood