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**TOP  
50  
BUILDERS**

How the nation's leading pool companies are surviving the slump



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# Keen on Green

Builders are finding ways to be eco-friendly

**By John Miles** According to at least one famous frog, it isn't easy being green. Sure, there are government rebates and high-ticket equipment, but many less prominent green practices are not as financially rewarding.

Still, some of this year's Top Builders go the extra mile to use energy-efficient technology and recyclable materials. Here's a look at what they're doing.

### Aqua Pool & Spa

Aqua Pool & Spa began reusing construction material long before being green was in vogue. And while recycling on the job does provide some savings, it wasn't inspired out of budget cuts.

"A lot of [our practices] aren't a cost savings as much as the right thing to do," explains Gregg Whitley, co-owner and vice

TOP GREEN COMPANIES	
COMPANY	STRATEGY
1 Aqua Pool & Spa	Reusing Materials
2 Shasta Industries	Going Paperless
3 Rosebrook Pools	Green Products

president for the Manteca, Calif.-based builder. "In terms of recyclables, the two largest categories are concrete and wood materials."

On the jobsite, Whitley has a keen eye for waste. Excavated concrete and gunite are recycled into a sub-base for rock structures and masonry projects. Deck form boards are reused in other projects. Even if the boards become too worn for accurate forms, they still can be utilized to make jigs and wood stands. Elsewhere, short rebar is used for stakes and extra PVC for pressure testing.

There are also a number of cost-saving

green measures that Aqua implements within its own retail store.

These include alternating store lighting with natural light, depending on how bright it is outside. Sim-

ilarly, on temperate days, Aqua opens its doors and turns off the heat and AC.

"There's a balance there we've tried to employ with both the lighting and the temperature," Whitley notes.

### Rosebrook Pools

Rosebrook Pools concentrates more on using green-friendly materials that cater to a high-end demographic.

"There's a ton of recycled materials [to use in pools], but just because it's recycled, doesn't mean it's cheap," notes Jaime Ori,

## TOP 30 FAVES

A look at the tools, products and concepts that keep these pool builders on top.

**TRUCK: Chevy C1500**  
Ken Chandler, Presidential Pools & Spas, Gilbert, Ariz.



**WEBSITE: ups online.com**  
Michael Schnider, Intercoastal Pool & Spa Builders, Melbourne, Fla.

**TYPE OF PROJECT: Vanishing Edge; All Tile Interior**  
Lew Akins, Ocean Quest Pools by Lew Akins, Belton, Texas



## WORDS to Live By

"Be proactive rather than reactive."

Jamie Ori, Rosebrook Pools, Libertyville, Ill.





**TOP 50 BUILDERS**

principal at the company. "But that's what people want now. They can't get [being green] out of their head, and they're willing to pay for it."

The Libertyville, Ill.-based firm uses a wide variety of recycled construction materials. Tile and coping are often made

of recycled glass, and patios are created from recycled composite granite. Ori even special-orders a chemical-free shotcrete mix for a more green-friendly pool structure.

Rosebrook also offers sustainable solutions around the yard.

"We do on-site storage tanks underground that collect all the run-off from the patio and downspouts. They can use it for the autofill on the pool, sprinklers, [or] theoretically anything," Ori says.

The pools use a nonchlorine sanitizing system to avoid damage to the lawn, and run-off water passes through a cartridge filter before being redistributed. Ori even built a project where run-off water is redirected to the house, where it's treated with a commercial filter system and reverse osmosis.

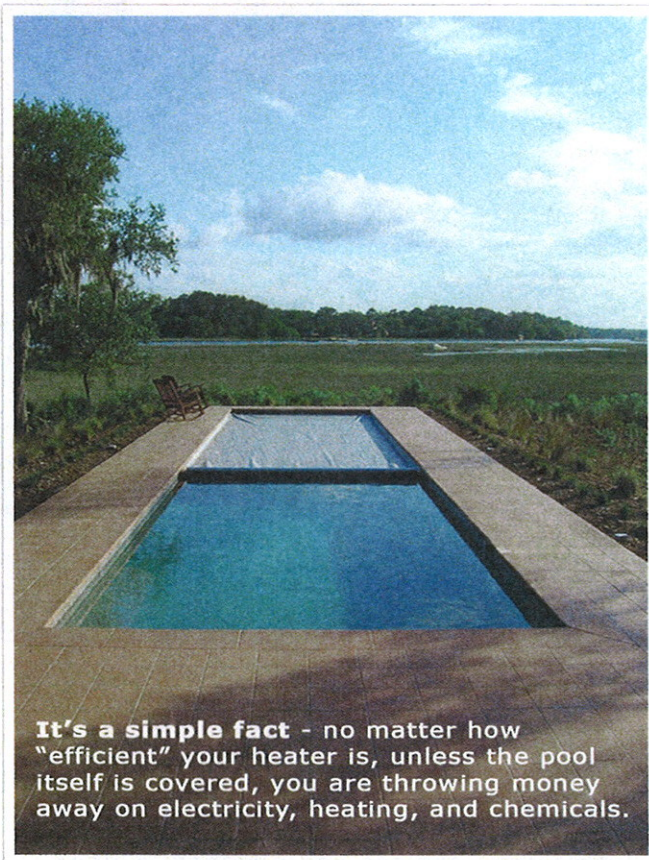
**Shasta Industries**

Sometimes, green can be achieved from an operational standpoint. Beginning in 2006, Shasta Industries has made a concentrated effort to go completely paperless. By choosing document scanning over hard copies, the builder estimates savings of nearly \$500,000 last year.



going **Green**

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**Shasta eliminated couriers and synchronized business**

"It's been a major breakthrough in terms of people efficiency and resources, and access to the information," said Bob Dye, controller for the Phoenix-based firm.

By scanning documents into the computer system, Shasta eliminated couriers between locations and synchronized business with its various vendors.

The proliferation of electronic documents could even extend to the homeowner, where they would see an onscreen blueprint of the design and be able to sign off on a contract.

"Certainly the green impact is part of what we've accomplished and what we want to accomplish, but the main goal really is to reduce our costs and provide a better experience to the customer, our vendors and our employees," Dye says.

