

EVEREST CONSTRUCTION GROUP

LEED accreditation and a focus on indoor air quality help builder keep moving in a sustainable direction **BY JOYCE FINN**

THE BEST OF
GREEN
BUILDING



Everest Construction Group works closely with its lumber suppliers to ensure minimal waste and uses recycled products such as reclaimed floors, old sinks, tubs, and cabinets.

AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:

Dallas, TX

FOUNDED:

2004

EMPLOYEES:

4

AREAS OF SPECIALTY:

Residential construction, remodels and renovation

“PEOPLE STAY IN THE HOUSE...FOR REMODELING JOBS. A lot of the dust is harmful, the insulation is bad, and there are lead-based paint issues. It’s possible to vacuum up all the dust, but when we leave it settles all through the house and particles stay in the air. Homeowners breathe the air, the children in the house breathe the air, my employees breathe the air, and I breathe the air,” Chris Robertson says. “So we keep it as clean as possible and take interior air quality to a whole new higher level.” This commitment to healthy air is what sets the president and the company he co-founded with high-school friend Jason Black apart from the dustier, dirtier competition.

Founded in 2004, Everest Construction Group is a LEED-accredited, general-contracting firm in Dallas, Texas. “There are very few LEED-accredited residential builders in Dallas, so having that qualification really helps our business,” says Robertson, who notes that the company’s reputation and relationship with clients is strong enough that greater than 90 percent of new customers are word-of-mouth referrals. “We treat all our customers as if they’re movie stars, whether it’s a \$1,000 bathroom renovation or a \$1 million remodeling project.”

Everest Construction Group averages 12–30 residential remodeling projects per year with an average cost of \$200,000–250,000 and is a member of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) and an Energy Star Partner. Robertson goes on to say that one of the most difficult problems contractors



For this kitchen, Everest Construction Group used local concrete for countertops and salvaged material for the floors and cabinets.

have is differentiating between what is Gizmo Green and what really is a green product that will help the environment as well as a home's interior environment. The company's strong emphasis on interior air quality differentiates Everest Construction Group from its competitors. To minimize interior dust and dirt while remodeling, the company uses air scrubbers on even the smallest of projects.

Everest Construction Group also uses recycled products such as reclaimed floors, old sinks, tubs, and cabinets. On one property, kitchen counters were made from mahogany floorboards from an old railway boxcar. For new green products, the company uses recommendations from the USGBC such as urea-free, non-toxic subflooring and low-VOC paint. Most of its vendors and suppliers are local to the area, which cuts transportation costs and forges strong local relationships. Robertson cites as an example a local carpet-recycling company that takes carpets Robertson removes at the start of a remodeling project, recycles them using all non-toxic products and no-VOC glues, and then sells it back to the remodeler for installation. When the carpet has outlived its effective life it can be recycled again. On each new project, the company contacts Habitat for Humanity's recycling program to see if there is anything the non-profit would want or could use.

"I run into people who think green is a passing fad. It's not a passing fad; it's here to stay," Robertson says. "Going green doesn't mean you have to go off the grid and add solar panels and that sort of stuff. LEED is just a better code and we should be going in that direction. Educating the public has been the biggest hurdle."

“

There are very few LEED-accredited residential builders in Dallas, so having that qualification really helps our business.

– *Chris Robertson, President*

”

Two recently completed projects include an historic preservation of a 1920s home in the Junius Heights area of Dallas, an area rated by *This Old House* as one of the top ten historic neighborhoods in the country. The second is the recently completed Ben Abbott Law Firm offices in downtown Dallas. Everest Construction Group also recently partnered with an architecture firm to offer full design-build options to clients. With this new direction and its LEED accreditation, the firm intends to focus on increasing its number of LEED projects in 2010 and 2011. GBQ

CLA ELECTRIC

P: 214-906-1920 • F: 972-278-6596 • E: CLAElectric@aol.com

Services:

Residential & Commercial New Construction •
Remodeling • Design Build • Data/Communication •
Structure Wiring

Licensed • Insured • 5 years in business

Products:

Install Only UL Listed Materials • Cutler Hammer Products
Halo Air Tight Recessed Lighting • NEC Electrical Code Standards

