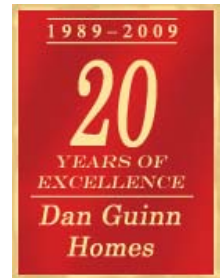


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HOUSE WISE

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A Big Screen Must Have

By Elizabeth Guinn

Solves the Power Hog Issue.

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Technology has done it again! This time the exciting news is coming from LG. Everyone nowadays wants a big beautiful TV screen since more and more people are staying home and watching their movies on the not so big screen in their family room. The problem is that big plasma systems are energy hogs. Generally I tell everyone to put their TV and cable boxes on power strips so that they can be turned completely off when not actually being used but that can be difficult with the larger flat screen TV's. The majority of people are mounting them directly to the wall and then plugging them into special plugs directly behind the TV which makes adding a power strip almost impossible. You may also hardwire a switch to the outlet but this option may require opening up the wall which could be costly.

LG has come out with a much better TV solution that solves the power hog issue. LG has created the LG 47LH90 47" LCD TV.

Please see *Light* on page 2

Dan's Desk

By Dan Guinn

Some things are green, which means good for the environment, and save you money and some are just green. This week while perusing one of my favorite construction websites, I ran into some green concrete. If you have ever worked with concrete at all, green concrete generally means concrete that hasn't fully cured. But that's not what I'm talking about and before you ask, no, it is not actually the color green either although that may look rather nice.

This is more environmentally friendly concrete

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The major difference with this LCD TV is the source of the back lighting. With current LCD TV's the backlighting is done with a type of fluorescent bulb. Because it is fluorescent it requires a ballast that needs to have current flowing to it all the time to keep the bulb warmed up and ready to go. LCD's with fluorescents are still a better solution to the big TV problem than plasma's, but this innovation is even better. With the LG TV, the back lighting source is LED's(light emitting diodes). Since LED's use so much less energy, in some cases one tenth the amount of a fluorescent bulb, and last so much longer than fluorescents, they are a much more energy efficient choice for a TV. They also don't have to stay warmed up because LED's do not require a warm up period and turn on immediately.

I know, you're wondering how well does this puppy perform. I checked out the reviews for TV's on CNET, a top reviewer for technical gadgets. Reviews don't get much better than this http://reviews.cnet.com/flat-panel-tvs/samsung-ln-t4681f/4505-6482_7-32514516.html . The reviewers at CNET loved the picture, they had some issues with how the set came configured out of the box, but after tweaking the settings for optimum performance they raved about the quality of the picture. If you are a true videophile, check out the review for yourself to get all the geeky details. The part I liked most about their review came at the very end though. They added a juicebox at the end which totaled up how much energy or juice this system used. The final tally was that these new LG's use less than one third of the power of the standard plasma TV. And the best part is that when you turn of an LED TV, it's really off, no power strip required.



Juice box

Samsung LN-T4681F	Picture settings		
	Default	Calibrated	Power Save
Picture on (watts)	194.65	112.57	112.03
Picture on (watts/sq. inch)	0.22	0.12	0.13
Standby (watts)	1.18	1.18	1.18
Cost per year	\$59.83	\$34.90	\$37.77
Score (considering size)	Good		
Score (overall)	Good		

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*Taking you from
Dreams to Reality
Psalms 127:1a*

From *Dan's Desk* page 1

manufactured by Quikcrete and it is actually called Green Concrete Mix. The reason it is considered a green product is because the mixture contains 50% recycled concrete material which diverts .25 cubic feet of waste product from the waste stream for every bag of concrete mix. This is the right idea, although each bag contains a relatively small amount of recycled content it does cut down on the amount of materials we send to the landfills. I am all for re using materials in the construction process wherever possible! Unfortunately, like many green products on the market today, the down side is this green concrete costs more than the regular stuff. It is also brand new, so not all of our local DIY stores are going to have it just yet. I checked on the Lowe's website and they have a picture of the bag on the website that says not available in my area yet.

This is a great idea, and like many other new products over time the price may come down as it becomes more popular. There are many ways to use recycled materials in construction today. I have a better idea when it comes to recycled concrete that actually can save you money. When installing new driveways on our most recent projects, we decided to look for some sort of recycled material to use for the base aggregate driveway material other than natural stone. After talking with our local concrete company, we found that they routinely grind up left over and used concrete and then sell it as base material for driveways. The grinding process also produces different size aggregate so you have the same choices as natural stone as well.

We needed two different sizes of aggregate, regular driveway stone size and then something a little larger to form a construction entrance. Both sizes worked out great. It spreads just like stone, looks good and gives you a sense of satisfaction about how much material you have diverted from the waste stream. It is my personal opinion that it actually performs better than regular stone in that once it gets packed down and rained on a few times, it is very stable almost like concrete. I even like the lighter color it is more appealing to me as well as cooler in the summer months.

The only down side is that there can be a little debris in the mix, especially in the larger stone. The recycling process does not screen out all the waste material that you do not want. Because of this unwanted waste, It does require that you carefully walk the entire length of the driveway and watch for pieces of soda bottles, plastic bags or worse, a little bit of rebar. In a standard size dump truck load you may have a few shovel fulls of waste, not enough to make me reconsider my choice. This product also makes for good base material wherever natural stone would be used, after all if you are going to cover it up with concrete or other material what does it matter if it has some debris in it you will never even notice the difference. I love it and it makes me feel good about re using material that otherwise would end up in our landfills. On the economic side it is considerably cheaper than natural stone, what more can you ask?