



## The Carbon-Free Home: 36 Remodeling Projects to Help Kick the Fossil-Fuel Habit

By Stephen & Rebekah Hren

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### **The Carbon-Free Home: 36 Remodeling Projects to Help Kick the Fossil-Fuel Habit** By Stephen & Rebekah Hren

You probably know that energy used in your home produces more global-warming pollution than your car, but what can you do to reduce your reliance on fossil fuels? Maybe you daydream of starting from scratch, building a new, super-efficient, passive-solar, off-grid house—but in reality you've got a roof (and a mortgage) over your head already. How can you turn your existing house into an environmental asset? One that simultaneously saves you money on utilities and insulates you from the possible shocks of Peak Oil?

Read this book—then grab your handsaw, tape measure, and drill, and get started! A life powered by the sun is waiting for you. Meant as a guide for renovating existing homes, *The Carbon-Free Home* gives you the hands-on knowledge necessary to kick the fossil-fuel habit, with projects small and large listed by skill, time, cost, and energy saved. For every aspect of your life currently powered by fossil fuels, *The Carbon-Free Home* offers alternatives you can accomplish yourself to get started using renewable and sustainable sources of power.

Having weaned themselves completely from fossil fuels in their conventional 1930s urban house, Rebekah and Stephen Hren provide a map for others to do the same. Their book shows first how to reduce energy consumption, then to retrofit existing homes to obtain all heating, cooling, cooking, refrigeration, hot water, and electricity from renewable sources. The Hrens also provide advice on renewable methods of transportation and home gardening. These practical approaches fit anyone's budget and can be implemented over time to progressively liberate a home from fossil-fuel dependency.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

##### ***Publishers Weekly -***

With an endearing mix of down-to-earth practical solutions and funky DIY projects, this book provides readers with much-needed information on how to renovate habits and home to move closer to a zero-carbon existence. The Hrens, respectively a carpenter and a photovoltaic installer living in Durham, N.C., give specific and technical advice, based on their own experience, on how to lower energy use within and outside the house, with 36 projects ranging from simple and inexpensive activities like sealing drafts, resetting the water heater thermostat and planting potatoes in a barrel to more heavy-duty and costly tasks such as installing a green roof or a solar hot-water heater and replacing a lawn with a permaculture garden. Some projects, such as building an outdoor cob oven--which the authors themselves describe as time-consuming with low energy savings--will be of little interest to any but devoted backyard hobbyists. Converting from a flush toilet to humanure, which involves lugging five-gallon buckets of human waste to a compost pile on a weekly basis, is even less likely to be adopted by the urban dwellers the Hrens hope to influence. But just about anyone will find something useful to do in this book, and the detailed, clear and enlightening chapter on understanding home energy use is, alone, almost worth the purchase price.

"It's hard to imagine a more comprehensive, and comprehensible, guide to making your home work for you and for the planet, inside and out. It's frugal, it's sensible, and it will help!"--**Bill McKibben, author of *Deep Economy and Fight Global Warming Now***

"*The Carbon-Free Home* is a wonderfully useful guide to reducing household reliance on fossil fuels. Most of us have very little idea how many hydrocarbons we're using--until we do a personal inventory. The harsh reality is that we have all become complicit in an energy system whose future is bleak and unsustainable. It's time to bail out, and this book tells us how."--**Richard Heinberg, Senior Fellow at the Post Carbon Institute and author of *The Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies***

"It is now evident that we have come to the end of the first half of the Age of Oil, when the production of oil-based energy fueled an expanding economy in which consumers were encouraged to feed their appetites. In energy terms, current oil production is equivalent to 22 billion slaves working night and day, but it is a finite resource formed in the geological past and therefore subject to depletion. As every beer-drinker knows, the glass starts full and ends empty. The quicker he drinks it, the sooner it is gone. It is the same with oil. The second half of the Age of Oil, which now dawns, will be very different. The economy will have to contract in

parallel with oil supply, and people will have to turn to new and more sustainable life-styles. This book is essential reading, giving a full spectrum of invaluable advice on how to adapt to the new conditions imposed by Nature. It is far from a doomsday message as it offers hope for a new, more benign age. The transition will be tough but this book explains how to plan and prepare."--**Colin J. Campbell, Chairman of ASPO (Association for the Study of Peak Oil)**

"While not for the timid or tool-phobic, *The Carbon-Free Home* is a gold mine of inspiration and information for those hands-on people with more time and energy than money, and a passion to help save the planet."--**Beth Sachs, Executive Director of Vermont Energy Investment Corporation**

"This is the perfect book for people who want to roll up their sleeves to save the planet. It is informative, well researched, easy to follow, and inspiring. Our future depends on each of us reducing our carbon footprint. *The Carbon-Free Home* is a great resource to assist in this adventure of our time."--**David Gershon, author of *Low Carbon Diet: A 30 Day Program to Lose 5,000 Pounds and Green Living Handbook: A 6 Step Program to Create an Environmentally Sustainable Lifestyle***

"This is an excellent resource for people committed to reducing their energy consumption and carbon emissions."--**Joe Loper, Vice President for Policy and Research, Alliance to Save Energy**

"We all know in our hearts, but shun the thought, that one day we must kick the fossil fuel habit. Stephen and Rebekah Hren have grasped the nettle and implemented simple and ingenious do-it-yourself technologies to achieve the goal of zero-carbon living. Their book offers a rich selection of options for all who desire to reduce their carbon footprint."--**John Terborgh, Director of the Duke University Center for Tropical Conservation and author of *Requiem for Nature***

"If you want clean fingernails along with a clean conscience, then I can't recommend this book. If you believe that industrial capitalism is systematically silencing the divine voices of the biosphere, and you feel

responsible enough to do something, then read it and heed it. We can't pontificate our way out of the awful mess we have, and we can't whine our way out either. We have to design our way out, and *The Carbon-Free Home* explains in plain language how to start designing-out in our own crawlspaces and attics. The measures we take now for our individual independence will soon enough be required for our collective survival. Stephen and Rebekah Hren have provided a practical education for tomorrow's most essential revolutionary cadres."--**Stan Goff, author of *Hideous Dream and Full Spectrum Disorder***

"*The Carbon-Free Home* confronts the hard truth about reducing our carbon impact on the world. The Hrens share their broad experience to give us all the head start we need to move towards a sustainable lifestyle. If you're willing to do the work, this book will inspire you to squeeze every molecule out of your carbon budget."--**Paul Scheckel, author of *The Home Energy Diet***

"The Hren's book provides an meaningful pathway to a carbon-free lifestyle--including everything from the latest in high-tech equipment to homemade solutions that will satisfy the earthiest of back-to-landers."--**Michael Welch, Redwood Alliance**

"Stephen and Rebekah's *The Carbon-Free Home* is a remarkable book. It's thorough, well researched, and a delight to read. Its many practical solutions offer hope for individual action in the face of daunting environmental crisis. Reading it made me want to go home and get started on projects for our house."--**Lyle Estill, author of *Small is Possible: Life in a Local Economy***

#### About the Author

Stephen and Rebekah Hren live in Durham, North Carolina, where they are both actively involved with renewable energy, natural building, and edible urban gardening. Rebekah works with Honey Electric Solar, Inc. as a professional designer/installer of photovoltaic systems and domestic solar hot water systems. She is a NABCEP-certified solar photovoltaic installer, licensed electrical contractor, and ISPQ-certified solar instructor for Solar Energy International. Stephen is a professional restoration carpenter, focusing on antebellum houses. He teaches natural building classes and workshops at the local community college, and in any spare time works with Bountiful Backyards, an edible landscaping cooperative. They are the authors of *The Carbon-Free Home*.

#### Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Carrie Wilson:**

As people who live in the actual modest era should be up-date about what going on or details even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era that is certainly always change and advance. Some of you maybe may update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what one you should start with. This The Carbon-Free Home: 36 Remodeling Projects to Help Kick the Fossil-Fuel Habit is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and need in this era.

**Brian Bauer:**

This The Carbon-Free Home: 36 Remodeling Projects to Help Kick the Fossil-Fuel Habit is great reserve for you because the content that is full of information for you who else always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This specific book reveal it information accurately using great plan word or we can point out no rambling sentences inside. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole details in it. Doesn't mean it only provides straight forward sentences but tricky core information with splendid delivering sentences. Having The Carbon-Free Home: 36 Remodeling Projects to Help Kick the Fossil-Fuel Habit in your hand like finding the world in your arm, facts in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no reserve that offer you world throughout ten or fifteen tiny right but this e-book already do that. So , this is good reading book. Hey Mr. and Mrs. busy do you still doubt which?

**Lenore Cortez:**

In this particular era which is the greater person or who has ability in doing something more are more important than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple method to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to have a look at some books. One of many books in the top listing in your reading list will be The Carbon-Free Home: 36 Remodeling Projects to Help Kick the Fossil-Fuel Habit. This book which can be qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking upwards and review this publication you can get many advantages.

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