Sustainable Shelter

DWELLING WITHIN THE FORCES OF NATURE

What can we learn from nature to make our dwellings more sustainable parts of the earth’s natural systems?

Shelter is a universal human need – a need we share with other living things. Since buildings consume lots of resources and almost half of all the energy used in the United States, it’s important that we make them more efficient.

Just as birds select and gather materials from their local environments to fashion safe and nurturing nests, humans build homes that use natural resources to meet a vast array of our needs and desires. Sustainable Shelter investigates the ways that human dwellings extract, use, and discard energy, water, and other precious natural resources. The exhibit reveals innovative new building technologies and strategies that can help restore the health and viability of natural cycles.

This exhibition introduces visitors to the functions of shelters, and how animals and humans have adapted to differing environments through an amazing diversity of structures.

Graphics, cartoons and interactive computer games explore how daily actions are part of the earth’s carbon and water cycles. Visitors are invited to test ways to make homes more sustainable with hands-on exhibits. Scale models show how the size and environmental impact of American homes have changed over time. Visitors can then build a model of a home that incorporates many of the environmental features presented in the exhibition.

Wall-sized graphics display an amazing depth of information with fun and engaging illustrations.

Exhibition Facts

EXHIBITION INCLUDES:
- Forces of Nature Theater
- Animal Nests and Structures
- Diversity of Shelter Wall
- Carbon Cycle Animation
- Energy Flow Projection Wall
- Home Energy Game
- Life-Cycle of a House
- Energy Use in Homes
- Water Use in Homes
- Life-Cycles of Common Building Materials
- Sustainability Research Mini-Theater
- Diversity of Wall Systems
- Compare Typical to Sustainable Construction
- Water and Energy Interactives
- Models of Typical Houses Over Time
- Build Your Own Sustainable Home Activity
- Life-sized Ant Colony and Termite Mound
- Living Mini-Biosphere

Space Required: 3,000 to 4,000 square feet
Number of Crates: TBD (30-40 estimated)
Security: Moderate (interpretive staff recommended)
Fee: $35,000 for 3 month booking (bookings in 2012 are available for a reduced rate of $25,000). Renting institutions are responsible for all shipping costs.

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Termite Mound

Scale Models and Structures

Wall Graphics and Projections

Animations and Videos

Diversity of Shelter Wall and Forces of Nature Theater

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OF NATURAL HISTORY
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