

# NORTH CAROLINA HAS THE GREENEST HOTEL IN THE US



Let's face the facts: the hotel industry is generally quite rightly viewed as downright wasteful. The lighting of unoccupied rooms, the discarded and unread copies of complimentary newspapers, the extra wrapping for the bars of soap, the electricity for mini bars in every room which are rarely used and the endlessly transmitting television sets because the client says to himself 'I am not paying for the electricity' are to name just a few of the very non-green

aspects of the hotel industry. Calls from the greener members of society have been made to arrest this wastefulness and turn the hotel business into a symbol of environment protection. The Proximity Hotel, Greensboro, North Carolina, is so far America's best answer to this problem. The hotel is famous for using 40% less energy and 30% less water. Today it carries the title 'America's greenest hotel'.

When told that the Proximity has 7.000 square feet of private event space, 147 rooms and extremely affordable prices, one may tend to think that it is indeed more damaging to the environment than other hotels. This is far from the truth. The Proximity boasts more efficient plumbing facilities than other hotels and is therefore responsible for less water usage. Furthermore, almost everything in the hotel is recycled. The recycled materials include 100% sheetrock, 90% reinforced steel and 25% asphalt. It goes without saying that other every day amenities such as toilet paper and towels belong to the recycled bracket. The hotel has 100 solar rooftop panels which heat the water used in all 147 rooms.

The manager of the hotel recently pointed out that customers really do not care whether their water was heated by natural gas or by the sun, the result is the same. However, the latter option is certainly greener. The hotel's real party piece and prized asset is the Otis Gen2. This lift does not only save energy, yet is the world's first electricity generating lift, as it creates energy when descending. Let's hope that the Proximity is the first of many green hotels across the planet.

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