

May 2009

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

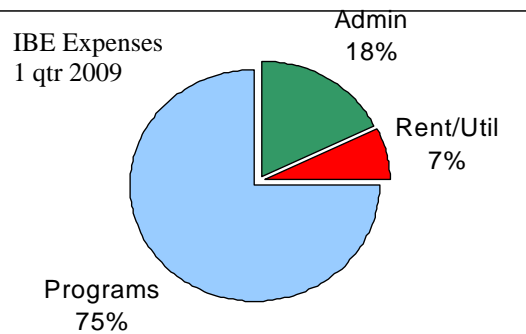
- 1 Get Involved
- 2 Calendar of Events
- 2 Building Biology Course Materials: Sizing an Air Conditioner
- 2 Inside Scoop
- 3 Healthy Home Corner: We shape our buildings...
– Paula Baker-Laporte
- 3 Reader's Corner

Thank you for your support

We want to take this time to thank all those who have renewed their membership for 2009. Special thanks to all the volunteers at IBE; instructors, newsletter contributors, Board of Directors, Executive Board, committee members and more!

With your commitment and donations we have the tools to make it easy for everyone to get the information they need to live, work and play in the healthiest environment possible. At IBE we make a concerted effort that all donated (membership dues) funds are used for outreach programs.

As you can see below, we are able to keep our overhead costs down, so that 75% of our total expenses are for programming. We can do that because of the host of volunteers that help.



Our goal for 2009 is to increase our outreach programs, but we can only do that with YOUR HELP. Please sign up for a membership. If you are already a member and wish to donate money, you can do so by simply repeating the membership process for payment.

Get Involved

How can you help in this critical outreach?

Write an article

The EcoDwell is always looking for articles to include in its newsletter. The article must pertain to Building Biology issues and be one-page in length.

Please submit articles to outreach@buildingbiology.net for future issues.

Review a course

IBE is in the process of updating many of its courses to reflect current research and industry trends. We are looking for individuals who have some extra time and can commit to doing this.

Contact IBE if you are interested at outreach@buildingbiology.net.

IBE is Seeking an ED

IBE is seeking to fill the part-time executive director (ED) position. This position has been temporarily occupied by Vicki Warren.

The position is part-time (20hrs/wk), work from home with some travel. The qualifications for the position include experience in NPO/NGO, preferably in development.

Salary will be negotiated based on experience and organizational needs.

Join this exciting organization and help it reach new heights in 2010.

Contact IBE if you are interested at staff@buildingbiology.net.



With your help we can change the environment. Join for 2009.

Sign up today to start making a difference

Become a Member
[IBE Membership](#)

* Membership dues above \$65 include a subscription to Natural Life Magazine

Calendar of Events

May 16-19, 2009

IBE 313 – Natural Healthy Building,
Summertown, TN for practicing
BBEC's and Natural Builders

May 21 – 25, 2009

IBE 211 – Indoor Air Quality Seminar,
Clearwater, FL

Aug 20 – 24, 2009

IBE 212 – Electromagnetic Seminar,
Clearwater, FL

December 3-7, 2009

IBE 213 – Natural Healthy Building,
Clearwater, FL

*Stay tuned for other events including
programs in your area by approved
providers.*

Each month IBE will provide excerpts from their well-researched course material to empower you to take control of your indoor environment and building.

Building Biology Course Materials: Sizing an Air Conditioner

Building biology teaches that the best way to heat and cool a home is to use natural methods that are supplemented with mechanical means, only when necessary. In the event that mechanical means are required, it is important that the equipment be selected that provides the healthiest and most energy-saving approach.

Bigger is Not Better: Sizing Air Conditioners Properly. It is generally accepted that "the right way" to specify an air conditioning system is to calculate the loads and select a piece of equipment that will provide comfort to the customer in a wide variety of conditions. Unfortunately this is rarely practiced.

Quite often, contractors will not submit a sizing calculation, or if they do, they will install an over-sized unit.

This over-sized unit is "justified" with statements such as "then you will always have plenty of cooling."

With an over-sized unit, the air conditioner cycles on and off more often and for shorter periods of time than it should even during the hottest weather.

In addition to costing more to buy, the air conditioner will use more energy than a properly sized system. It won't dehumidify the air as well as a smaller system would.

There have been cases of over sized AC units in humid climates where indoor humidity was so high that mold growth occurred on cool indoor surfaces creating a disastrous situation.

Source:

John Proctor · Zinovy Katsnelson · Brad
Wilson Home Energy Magazine Online
May/June 1995,
<http://homeenergy.org/archive/hem.dis.anl.gov/eehem/95/950509.html>



Inside Scoop

Note from the Editor

Last year I moved into a 15 year old home in the country. It is a beautiful home in a beautiful setting. Nice open front rooms with geometric fixed glass window walls and six skylights. Stunning view of rose garden, fish pond and landscape waterfall. So relaxing... and HOT as you know what in the summer! The summers in North Carolina are humid to say the least and we are a family that strongly prefers to not use central air conditioning (the air conditioning would not cool that part of the house anyway).

It took me a few weeks of experimenting to get the front room cooled down for comfort without running the air conditioner.

I covered the beautiful inoperable windows with colored cotton cloth (I can easily remove for washing). I covered the skylights on the roof with pretty green drop cloths (we still benefit from the light shining through the green cloth and very little heat comes through). I open the windows early in the morning for cross ventilation and close them when the outside air starts to warm up (the cool air is "trapped" inside). In late afternoon I open the windows slightly and turn on the whole house fan for 15 minutes to suck out any heat build up from the day. And about an hour before bedtime I turn back on the whole house fan for about 30 minutes for sleeping comfort.

So, THE INSIDE SCOOP is:

With desire for natural cooling in summer and some experimentation you can create a comfortable, nurturing home environment for your family. Know which direction your house/dwelling sits on the land; know what time of day the sun is hottest in each room; consider planting shade trees in the areas where there is infiltration of sun in the summer (while in the winter allowing sun to penetrate for thermal qualities since leaves will be gone). See Paula's article on Page 3.

Healthy Home Corner: We shape our buildings...

by Paula Baker-Laporte FAIA

(Appeared in the Dec 2008 issue of Santa Fe Real Estate Guide)

"We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us" -Winston Churchill.

The creation of a home is, by no means, a simple act. Thousands of decisions will go into that process and those decisions will be based on stated or unstated cultural values. A home built with the intention of being the largest space for the least amount of money will look, feel and act very differently than one where the driving force of the design is "authenticity", the health of the occupant and concern for our ecology. It costs a little more per square foot to build a home that won't harm our health and more again to build one that will deeply nurture us. No one expects a superbly engineered Mercedes to cost the same as a compact economy car because we understand the quality factor. But when it comes to assessment of real estate there is a disproportionate emphasis on initial "cost per square foot" and this remains a stumbling block for homeowners who would choose quality over quantity.

Our homes *are* our greatest investment not just financially but in our health, the health of the environment and in our children's future. Becoming informed home buyers and occupants is the surest way to find and maintain a good home.

The act of dwelling and all its associated systems was once innate cultural knowledge passed on from generation to generation in homes that were also passed on from generation to generation. Now understanding home is considered to be specialized knowledge. In fact most home energy rating systems assume occupant ignorance. For example mechanized occupant sensors to turn lights on and off and operate mechanical

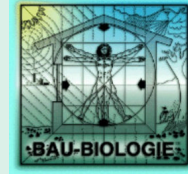
ventilation systems are rewarded on green scorecards. But mechanical systems inevitably break long before the life of a home is played out. Wouldn't it be smarter to reward built-in opportunities for occupants to operate their homes wisely over the expected life of the building?

In our high desert climate, with large daily temperature swings, a combination of shading, cross ventilation and interior mass walls works well to cool a home without the need for mechanical intervention if occupants open their windows at night. These same mass walls, if heated by a radiant heat source, help to keep a home comfortably warm in the winter.

We know that less need for mechanical intervention means less energy use but it can also mean a healthier living environment. The ideal indoor climate would emulate the feel of the outdoor climate on a fine day. Heating air and blowing it around through duct work changes the nature of that air. The indoor air is depleted of health enhancing negative ions because they cling to metal and synthetic ductwork. Circulating heat via forced air tends to create stratified temperature differentials and makes us uncomfortable. Forced air systems are noisy. Baseboard heaters trap and fry dust and create pollution. Electric baseboard heaters emit high magnetic fields. Radiant floor heating, perhaps one of the more comfortable options, has long response times and creates temperature monotony.

Does it not make ultimate sense to first design a home with the least need for mechanical intervention and then choose our intervention wisely?

Paula Baker-Laporte FAIA is an architect and a certified building biology practitioner. She is the principle of Baker-Laporte and Associates and EcoNest Design. She is primary author of "Prescriptions for a Healthy House" and co-author with husband Robert Laporte of "Econest-Creating Sustainable Sanctuaries of Clay, Straw and Timber"



Have you been thinking about creating a healthy home, but putting it off? Too hard, too little time – not any more.

IBE 101 is a home-study course with all of the books, videos, materials and guidance to do an assessment of your own home.

Learn how to make your home healthier for your family. Share the information & cost with friends and neighbors.

Become part of the few that will influence the thousands.

[Sign up for IBE 101](#)

Delay no longer. IBE is offering a limited time discount on this course designed just for you.

Reader's Corner

Featured Course:

[*IBE 101 Natural Healthy Bldg](#)

Suggested Book:

Tired and Toxic

by Sherry Rogers, M.D.,
Prestige Publishing

Suggested Website:

www.healtoxics.org

Suggested Conference:

LIA Lyme-Autism Conference
June 25 - 28, Scottsdale, AZ
www.lymeinducedautism.com