



CORPUS CHRISTI

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Section D

## BUSINESS & OPINION

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Contributed photo

Mirador Life Care Retirement Community, shown here in a rendering, is designed with the environment in mind, with energy-saving appliances and lighting.

# Mirador goes green for health

### Retirement facility to feature cleaner air, natural light

BY FANNY S. CHIRINOS  
Caller Times

Building green is not only about protecting the environment, but about saving on electricity costs and keeping people healthy.

Owners and architects of Mirador Life Care Retirement Community, scheduled to begin construction later this year, say there are more reasons for people to go green. Their retirement facility will help its residents breathe cleaner air and keep energy costs down while bringing in more natural light.

Rocky Berg, a principal with the architectural firm Three, has been designing sustainable green facilities for the past 15 years. Green components include using recycled

wall coverings and carpets, metallic roofs that reflect the sun's rays, double-insulated laminate glass that lets light in while keeping the heat out, sealants with low volatile organic compounds, energy-efficient appliances and a more efficient footprint, he says.

"For the Mirador, we took advantage of the way the sun moves across the building and the way the breezes go in and out of the building," Berg said. "Even the exterior lighting system has light shields to control light pollution. These are small blinds that keep the light from going into the neighbor's yard so they're not blinded."

Charles Brewer is CEO and president of the company that owns the Mirador, Senior Quality Lifestyle Corp. His company has three similar facilities, two in Austin and one under development in Fort Worth.

"Energy conservation was a huge motivator," Brewer said. "The smaller the check you write

for energy, the better for your bottom line and environment. All our buildings have been designed to make them as energy-efficient as possible."

Another motivator is his customers' health, Brewer added.

"With seniors, green materials help keep them healthier and happier," he said. "Natural light helps their eyesight and also makes the space more pleasant versus artificial light."

When the need for artificial light arises, Berg is using fluorescent lights, which use less energy, he says. He also has an automatic light control system in common spaces that turns off lights when there is no one in the room.

The green building movement also is gaining momentum in the residential sector. Daniel Gallegos, community development coordinator for the city of Corpus Christi, said

### THE MIRADOR

The Mirador Life Care Retirement Community, at the corner of Staples Street and Yorktown Boulevard, is scheduled to open in 2010 with about 110 units ranging from assisted living to nursing care. Unit prices start at \$159,000.

**What:** Mirador Information Center  
**Where:** 7201 Lipis St.  
**Information:** 994-0900



Please see **MIRADOR 7D**

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## MIRADOR from 1D

the city is encouraging builders and designers to build green because it's the right thing to do for the environment and the community.

"We're not only looking at building an affordable home, we're looking at keeping utility costs affordable for residents," Gallegos said. "We want that small investment to be made because it will pay off big time in the long run."

Gallegos said his depart-

ment is looking at revamping its affordable housing program to incorporate more green design.

"There's a big misconception that going green will increase costs significantly," Gallegos said. "On average, you're looking at a 1 to 3 percent investment. You have to look at the long-term benefits and impact."

A lasting impact is what Brewer is banking on. The Mirador's design allows for a gray water system, which recycles water, to be added

in the future.

"It's important for corporations like us to make it a better environment from an air quality, light and health standpoint," he said. "Everything we do has to pay for itself and there's a lot more science being done there. There's more reasons than not to go green. It's good science and things are getting better."

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