

DAILY NEWS

QUEENS

Sunny side of the Solarium

L.I.C. condos are boro's 1st green-certified

BY [LEIGH REMIZOWSKI](#)

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IN A neighborhood once known for its factories and pollution, a new condo development is hoping to be a breath of fresh air.

Solarium, one of [Long Island City's](#) many swanky new apartment buildings, will be the first residential complex in Queens with a "green-certified" designation from a national building association when it opens next month.

The 35-unit building is stocked with Energy Star appliances, constructed with recycled materials and will extract some of its power from a windmill.

"We needed to be different," said [Rick Rosa](#), executive vice president of [Nancy Packes Inc.](#), the building's leasing consultant. "Right now, being green is a fad. In five years, that fad is going to be a reality."

And in the long run, energy costs will be significantly lower for residents.

"What it boils down to is, are they saving money?" Rosa said.

A 6-foot-wide [Honeywell](#) wind turbine - the first of its kind in [New York City](#) - will sit atop the eight-story building and help power its elevator and common areas. It starts turning with 0.4 mile-per-hour winds and begins producing energy at just under 2 mph.

"The standard turbine starts rotating at 7 to 8 miles per hour," said [Reg Adams](#), president of WindTronics, the [Michigan](#)-based company that created the turbine for Honeywell.

Solarium is the first multifamily residence in Queens to be green-certified by the [National Association of Home Builders Research Center](#), said spokeswoman Anne Holtz Schmick. The [U.S. Green Building Council](#), another group that issues the LEED certification, has not given its stamp of approval to any residential complexes in the borough, said spokeswoman [Ashley Katz](#).

"Anyone can say it's a green building, but the question is - is it really?" said [Tony Musso](#), an architect that developers hired to guide them through the green-certified process.

Solarium is, he said.

The building is made from recycled steel and concrete and its plant-filled roof is paved with used-tire rubber.

There are no bathtubs. Sink and shower faucets are water-efficient and the toilets are low-flow - all to conserve water.

An energy-efficient heating and cooling system, well-insulated walls and thick windows will make controlling the building's temperature cheaper, Musso said.

"Utility bills are going to be much lower," he said.

Developer Joe Palumbo said it cost about 15% more to construct a green building in comparison with his other complexes.

Prices range from just over \$400,000 for a one-bedroom condo to \$1.6 million for a three-bedroom townhouse.

"Residents will be paying a little more money for the green," Rosa said. "But buildings like this are giving back to the environment, not taking away from it."