

# real success:

## a profile of Fit 'n Furry

Fit 'n Furry is a state of the art pet care facility in Petaluma, California that offers boarding, grooming, and training in the city's first certified "All Green Commercial Building." Because Fit 'n Furry owners Grant and Marci Garl share "a passion for pets and planet," they integrated sustainability into their business plan from square one. By implementing more environmentally-friendly operations, including innovative ways to conserve water and choosing a sustainable design for their facility, the Garls are proving that green pet care equals business success.

With the support of the City of Petaluma and the Petaluma Chamber of Commerce, the Garls renovated a 17,000 square foot green indoor facility with 153 rooms and suites for dogs, 16 cat condos, and three play areas. To avoid the environmental impacts associated with new construction, the Garls retrofitted an existing building. They used salvaged materials as much as possible, including constructing play area floors from recycled tires. The lighting system and appliances are certified energy efficient and the walls contain double insulation. Low VOC paint means Fit 'n Furry's animal guests are not exposed to harmful off-gassed chemicals during their stay.

Pet care facilities typically use a lot of water to clean up after the animals go about their "business." However, wise water use is critical for a business located in a drought prone state, such as California. At Fit 'n Furry, floors are scrubbed using a unique wet and dry vacuum that "mops and scoops" simultaneously. This method uses ten times less water than traditional mopping. All faucets and sinks are fitted with low-flow devices. The use of biodegradable, environmentally-friendly cleaning solutions reduces the cleaning chemicals put down the drain. Even the dogs are bathed more efficiently at Fit 'n Furry. The dog tub is fitted with a spa pump that re-circulates water to keep it from continuously running down the drain.



The Garls estimate that the green design added about five percent to the cost of the retrofit but that the water and energy-efficiency measures will save money on an ongoing basis. Plus, recognition as a sustainable business attracts customers who are concerned about the environment. As a strategic business decision, going green is a way to differentiate Fit 'n Furry from competitors and fill a need in the local pet care market. Since Fit 'n Furry's doors opened two years ago, the steady stream of four-legged guests confirms that the Garls' choice to be a sustainable business was a wise one.

While greening is paying off financially, Mr. Garl believes that it is also the right thing to do ethically. Beyond the financial and market benefits, he is proud that Fit 'n Furry is a safe place for pets and people that provides goodwill in the community. "Long-term, we are all better off saving resources like water and fossil fuels. Would I encourage other business owners to go green? Sure!"

For a virtual tour and more information about Fit 'n Furry, visit [www.fitnfurry.com](http://www.fitnfurry.com).