Green Roofs

What is a green roof?
A green roof is a rooftop that is covered with a waterproof membrane, prepared with a lightweight soil or planting medium, and then planted with suitable plants. Green roofs absorb rain and release water slowly, reduce pollution and erosion from stormwater, and can also act as an insulating blanket, thus reducing heating and cooling costs.

There are different types of green roof installations, depending on the steepness of the roof, and whether the plantings will be actively managed or left to grow with little regular maintenance. On flat roofs, plantings can include trees and shrubs, and may be used as a rooftop garden. On pitched roofs, low-maintenance plants are usually selected. Plants like sedums are often chosen because they are drought tolerant and do well in a sunny location; however, other plants, including grasses and mosses, may be suitable.

Where can you see a green roof?
Whipple Riverview Place: 25 Green Street, Ipswich, MA
This green roof was planted with 3-4 inches of soil medium and 10 varieties of low-growing, drought-tolerant plantings, including 8 varieties of sedum, accented by chive (*Allium schoenoprasum*) and fame flower (*Talinum calycinum*).

The green roof is visible from the roof of the adjacent Ipswich Town Hall roof and is accessible by permission only, during guided tours.

Riverbend, Ipswich River Watershed Association Headquarters:
143 County Road, Ipswich, MA
The green roof is located over the new entryway on the north side of the house. The roof is quite shaded in summer, so mosses that are shade and drought tolerant were planted. Modular planting frames allowed planting to be done prior to installation, rather than having to do the planting on the roof itself.

This Keeping Water Local demonstration project was funded by the Massachusetts Riverways Program. The project was designed by K.J. Savoie Architecture, installed by Magco, Inc., and is being monitored by the U.S. Geological Survey.

For more information on green roofs and these projects, visit:

- [www.greenroofs.org](http://www.greenroofs.org)
- [www.earthouronlyhome.com](http://www.earthouronlyhome.com)
- [www.mass.gov/dcr/waterSupply/ipswichRiver](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/waterSupply/ipswichRiver)
- [www.ipswichriver.org](http://www.ipswichriver.org)

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