

Gate Crafters "**Green**" Gates: Aluminum is leading the way in green living.



Green energy, green products and green living have undoubtedly been the buzz words of the last few years. However these terms have people wondering what green really means. Does it mean savings for both yourself and the environment? Is a green product really better than its non-green counterpart? Does green really make sense in this situation?

When it comes to aluminum, which GateCrafters.com semi-custom driveway gates are all made from, the answer to all those questions is a resounding YES!



First, is the best part: the savings. Aluminum is a much less expensive option than steel, but why it is less expensive is what also makes it green. Aluminum is one of those few cutting edge materials referred to as C2C (cradle-to-cradle); this means at the end of its life as one product it is born again as another product. Aluminum can be recycled over and over without degrading or losing any of its innate characteristics. Virtually 100% of the internal scrap of our aluminum producers is reprocessed and converted into a usable raw material source for the extruded aluminum used in our gates. No waste is a key for cost control and environmental protection; and at the same time we are saving energy doing so. Recycled aluminum takes only 5% of the energy necessary to produce virgin aluminum.

Aluminum, a green product, is a better choice than steel because of its long life, structural strength and corrosion resistance. These factors are making aluminum the preferred material choice of forward-thinking designers, engineers, material specifiers and other throughout the world. One key factor that makes aluminum an environmentally better choice than steel is the fact that steel has to be galvanized in order to withstand outdoor conditions -

aluminum does not get galvanized like steel does.

The galvanization process has been linked world wide to environmental hazards. Although controls have been put in place in most modernized countries to curb this effect, those controls cost money to the supplier - so if you find a low priced steel gate most likely it is galvanized somewhere the controls are not implemented because low price of galvanized steel and environmentally responsible galvanization of steel are generally opposites. One of the main issues with galvanization is the waste water run off. During the galvanizing process, steel undergoes a pickling process. The pickling process involves immersing product





material through a series of tanks to clean and prepare the material prior to immersion in a molten zinc bath. Two major sources of wastewater are generated from the galvanizing process: waste acid and acidic rinse water. Waste acid is generated as a result of a build up of iron and other impurities in the acid which greatly reduces its effectiveness for pickling. The acid must be disposed of properly which takes up landfill space - if it is not disposed of properly it causes environmental damage. Acid rinse waters from the galvanizing process are acidic and contain low metals. This water is in the same situation as the acid - even if disposed of to a treatment plant still produces a sludge that has to be deposited in landfills. Lastly, zinc is used in the galvanization process. Zinc processing produces air emissions and solid waste emissions. The emissions include particulates, zinc fumes, volatile metals, flux fumes and smoke, rubber, plastics and zinc scrap.

For your future driveway gate - green really does make sense, for both you and the environment:

- Our aluminum suppliers comply with the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System created by the U.S. Green Building Council. This is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.
- Aluminum is one of earth's most plentiful recyclables: saving money, energy, and landfill space.
- The future value of having an aluminum gate vs. steel gate has yet to be seen in its totality. The U.S. Green Building Council, citing McGraw-Hill Construction's Green Outlook 2009 report predicts that by 2013 the overall green building market could more than double. Using green products in your current home additions will reflect on the future green value of your home as it increases in importance for sustainability.
- Aluminum makes a gate that will stand the test of time; it is trusted everywhere in major building projects. In Chicago more than one million pounds of aluminum were used in the construction of the 111 S. Wacker Drive building in Chicago's Loop. This includes in the building's unitizing curtainwall system, façade, structural components, and elevator cab framing.

Your source for American made aluminum driveway gates:

Gate Crafters: www.GateCrafters.com, 1-800-537-4283