FIGURE 16-9
As with other aspects of the design, sharing information with the entire team early in the process will make it much easier to meet environmental goals.

The next step is to define environmental goals for the project. The design team should define these as specifically as possible for each area of the project. For example, energy consumption, water use, and waste are easily quantified. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System (discussed below) can be very helpful in this regard in organizing the various issues and helping the team to set specific standards and goals. Part of the initial session's goal should be devoted to developing a methodology for making decisions and balancing resources.

Some teams have developed large-scale versions of LEED "scorecards," have them laminated for ease of using erasable markers, and use these as one tool for keeping up to date on various issues and the overall progress during the project.

The importance of setting goals cannot be overstressed. Unlike building budgets and schedules, environmental issues are not intuitively understood by most people. It is important that the design team set environmental goals and issues early and then revisit them at each project meeting.

GATHERING RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Once the design team has set initial goals, its next task will be to gather information about program needs and to explore all options for solving the basic needs with minimal resources. The team should identify specific needs for ventilation, humidification, and filtration, all of which will have an impact on indoor environmental quality and cost—and, if possible, identify local sources

FIGURE 16-10
Selecting environmentally benign materials does not inhibit design quality and, in most cases, does not impact the budget.

of materials. The team should look for opportunities for partnerships with suppliers, local utility companies, and others. It should identify possible sources for salvaged building materials that might be used in a project. If demolition is required, the team should consider what materials might be saved for reuse in the new project. It should also identify sources for building construction waste recycling and locate sources of information to help in the selection of materials. For example, wood paneling and structural members can frequently be reused. Carpet tiles can be renewed. Ceiling tiles can frequently be reused in back-of-the-house areas.