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The Next Wave

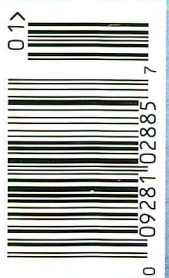
COASTAL TRENDS 2015

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Weathering well

Architect Charles Hilton, who designed this stylish home in Montecito, Calif., says exterior materials are becoming more durable.



The drawing room

Leading architect Mark McInturff at work in his Bethesda, Md., studio.

different parts of the state. Northern California gets rain but Southern California doesn't. We choose plants that work whatever the climate." artecho.com

New regulations are also creating emerging trends. "FEMA heights have been raised for houses along the ocean in many parts of the country, because of major storms like Sandy," says Alexander Gorlin, principal of Alexander Gorlin Architects in New York. "They've been raised as much as seven feet in Southampton, even for existing houses, for insurance purposes.

"The main trends are contradictory. There are houses being built on the ocean with enormous sheets of glass, which in a major storm would be blown away. They're built with structural frames, and the glass getting blown out is accepted. It's all for the views in between the big storms, and it's contrary to what you'd expect." gorlinarchitects.com

Charles Hilton, principal of Charles Hilton Architects in Greenwich, Conn., says trends in home exteriors are changing. "We're seeing more durable materials that will better handle harsh coastal environments," he notes.

"Nobody wants to paint their house every few years, so we're using PVC for trim because wood takes a beating on the water, and it keeps maintenance costs down," he adds.

"We're also using low-e (low thermal emissivity) coatings for coastal home windows and doors which offer better protection against solar gain and storm conditions." hiltonarchitects.com

Steve Schuster, principal of Clearscapes in Raleigh, N.C., says the ebb and flow of the economy is a factor. "The overall trend here is that the economy is bouncing back, and the Outer Banks is such a desirable lifestyle destination," he says.

"There's pretty significant commercial development, and a major boom in very large rental cottages - 24 bedrooms in one house, almost like an inn. You can hold weddings on the beach, with family and friends staying in the cottage. It's a high-quality and very attractive environment." clearscapes.com

"One major trend we're seeing is compactness, given all the environmental constraints on a site," says Mark McInturff, principal of McInturff Architects, based in Bethesda, Md. "A small footprint is the best thing to do. It disturbs the least amount of earth, particularly on smaller lots.

"My home on the Chesapeake Bay is on a small lot, and it had a house on it that limited my footprint. So I made a small incision into the land, and then piled on terraces, decks and a pool on top. So rather than occupy 50 percent of the lot, I occupy a tenth of it," he adds.

"Height is the result and in some ways it's wonderful.