



How to Design for a Changing Climate

A Small Firm Guide to Resilient Design

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Key Takeaways



Why should you care?

- Climate-related design issues impact not only buildings but also your clients.
- Everyone tackles resiliency issues specific to their location; including extreme high temperatures, wildfire risks, and intense storms.
- Designing for resiliency is inherently sustainable. Incorporating risk awareness, hazard mitigation, and climate adaptation into client and colleague conversations is imperative for producing design that addresses the future reality.



What can you do?

- Strategies to address resilience apply at all scales: individual buildings, communities, and larger regional ecosystems.
- More diverse communities, ecosystems, economies, and social systems are better able to respond to interruptions or change, making them inherently more resilient.
- Passive or manual-override systems are more resilient than complex solutions that can break down and require ongoing maintenance.
- Reliance on abundant local resources, such as solar energy, annually replenished groundwater, and local food, provides greater resiliency than dependence on non-renewable resources or far-away resources.

Resources / Links

- [Resilient Design Principles and Case Studies](#)
- [Fortified / Free technical documents & details for resilient building solutions](#)
- [Disaster-resilient design concepts organized by hazard type](#)
- [Better Buildings Initiative hub fueled by the US Department of Energy](#)
- [AIA's Framework for Design Excellence, informing progress toward a zero-carbon, healthy, just, resilient, and equitable built environment](#)
- [An Introduction to the AIA Framework for Design Excellence](#)
- [Resilience Design Toolkit & Resilient Project Process Guide](#)
- [Defining resilience in LEED v5](#)
- [Living Future](#)
- [PHIUS](#)
- [FEMA Building Science Resource](#)
- [AIA Resilience Certification](#)

Upcoming State Representative Calls:

06.12.2025 **Protecting Your Work**

07.10.2025 **Citizen Architect**