

## Building Biology News from the IBN, February 2025



Recently, Brigitte and Franz Reiner gave us valuable insights into their all-natural home, their natural building materials store, and their Building Biology Consulting Office IBN in 94327 Bogen, Lower Bavaria, Germany.

**"Show me how you build and I'll tell you who you are."**

Christian Morgenstern, (1871–1914), German writer

*Dear readers,*

*On February 23rd, there will be a federal election in Germany. It's not our job or intention to recommend who to vote for, because we want to be a point of contact and advice on healthy building for (almost!) all parties and voters. However, we are happy to share some points that you should consider when voting if democracy and healthy, ecological, and socially just building, living, and housing are important to you:*

- *A tax and contribution system that encourages environmentally friendly behavior*
- *Instead of building hundreds of thousands of new homes, promote more efficient use of existing buildings, such as renovations, additions, conversions, community living concepts, home exchanges, avoiding vacancies, etc.*
- *Developing all cities into socially inclusive and green [sponge cities](#)\* with significantly less private transport...*
- *Promoting environmentally friendly regional economic cycles – this includes decentralized and citizen-oriented energy production using renewable energies*
- *Strengthening environmental education at all levels*
- *We all share the same planet. Nationalistic ambitions are not only inhumane, they endanger the future of us all.*

*Also read our article "[Simply Building Better: 15 Demands for Policymakers and the Building Industry.](#)"*

*We hope you enjoy reading our February newsletter.*

*Winfried Schneider & the IBN Team*

*\* The concept of "sponge city" is also known as Natural Drainage Systems, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuSD), or Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD).*

**Missed a newsletter?** Past issues are available in the [Newsletter Archive](#).

## From the Building Biology Magazine

### Interview with Sonja Palmer – Building Biology Consulting Office IBN



Architect and historic preservationist Sonja Palmer has a deep understanding of historic materials and craftsmanship. She brings her "golden energy" to successful renovations.

*Achim Pilz asked the questions*

[Find out more](#)

### Cell tower radiation: field study confirms health risk for residents



In 2024, the ATHEM 3 study "Evaluation of Oxidative Stress and Genetic Instability among Residents Near Mobile Phone Base Stations in Germany" was published. It examines the long-term effects on the human body and detects genetic changes.

*Author: Peter Hensinger*

[Find out more](#)

### Air source heat pumps and noise control measures



More and more air source heat pumps are being installed outside buildings. These devices increasingly produce noise that is perceived as loud and unpleasant. This noise can be minimized by choosing the right location and using engineering noise control measures.

*Author: Achim Pilz*

[Find out more](#)

### Building Biology Magazine in English



We are making more of our information and technical articles available in English. Take a look and recommend it to others around the world.

Guidance for a healthy and sustainable living and work environment:

[buildingbiology.com](http://buildingbiology.com)

## How to become a Building Biology Consultant IBN



Are you looking for a meaningful and independent continuing education program that empowers you to find your own way through the jungle of information and greenwashing surrounding healthy and sustainable building, renovating, and living? Would you like to better position yourself professionally with this qualification?

Then you've come to the right place!

Since 1977, our **Building Biology Course** has proven itself and it is constantly updated.

In Germany, this online course is certified by AZAV, which means that course participants can [be reimbursed](#) for up to 100% of the course fees – this applies not only to job seekers but also to employees who want or need to continue their education.

[Click here](#) for full details of what is included and how to register. If you register as a guest, you can also access selected [course modules](#) for free to see if this course is right for you.

## Good to know

### IBN is "Top Fernschule 2025"



We have once again been recognized as a top distance learning school by the independent rating portal FernstudiumCheck! This award is based on 13,371 ratings from 402 institutions in 2024. We are very proud and excited about our students' ratings, with an average of 4.6 out of 5 stars and 99% recommending us! This award shows that many people appreciate our course content and our commitment to our health, our environment, and our future.

Do you want to make a difference?  
Become a Building Biology Consultant!

[Building Biology Course IBN](#)

## IBN recertifies Wood Clay Building Design of Fa. Kinskofer



We would like to congratulate Kinskofer Holzhaus GmbH on the successful recertification of their "Holz-Lehm-Haus Natur Massiv" building method. This means that customers can rely on a healthy and sustainable building method.

[Find out more](#)

### **Question for ChatGPT:** **What are the advantages of community living?**

**Answer from ChatGPT:** Community living offers a variety of benefits, including:

- 1. Social interaction:** Residents have the opportunity to develop close relationships with their neighbors, which strengthens the sense of community and belonging.
- 2. Resource sharing:** Community living allows for the sharing of resources such as tools, vehicles, or common areas, which saves money and reduces the carbon footprint.
- 3. Support and assistance:** In a community, residents can help each other with everyday tasks and crisis situations.
- 4. Diversity and inclusion:** Community living often attracts people from different backgrounds and lifestyles, resulting in a diverse and inclusive environment.
- 5. Cost effectiveness:** Sharing living space and facilities can reduce the cost of living, which is particularly beneficial for families or students.
- 6. Involvement:** Residents often have a say in decisions that affect community life, which can lead to greater satisfaction.
- 7. Sustainability:** Supportive housing projects often incorporate sustainable practices, such as community gardens or energy-efficient building methods that benefit the environment.

ChatGPT is a chatbot that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to communicate with users through text-based messages and images.



## Sustainable fashion: buying clothes with a clear conscience

In building biology, our homes are often referred to as our "third skin." Here we are talking about our "second skin," our clothes. According to the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, German consumers buy an average of 60 items of clothing per year, 40% of which are never or rarely worn. The production and purchase of fast-moving and often harmful cheap fashion (fast fashion) has more than doubled since the turn of the millennium – and continues to rise, with massive consequences for people and the environment. Fast fashion has an enormous impact on the environment and society. But consumers can help protect the environment and prevent exploitation. Tips for authentic sustainable fashion.

[Find out more](#) [UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion](#) [Food for thought](#)

## Question & Answer

### Can you build an entire house with unfired clay bricks?

The new DIN Standard 18940 for load-bearing masonry has been in effect since 2023. It applies to buildings up to 13 meters (42 feet) tall and regulates the principles for the design, construction, and execution of load-bearing unfired clay masonry.

[Find out more](#)

## Innovative products

### NEW: elka-Holzwerke GmbH



ELKA sees itself as a pioneer in the processing of climate-neutral and low-emission wood-based materials. For example, products such as cross-laminated timber panels (spruce), vita multilayer solid wood panels, and elka chipboard plus are still manufactured with white glue (PVAC) or MUF glue rather than isocyanate-based PU glue. The elka strong board (alternative to OSB) has very low formaldehyde emissions of less than 0.03 ppm.

[Find out more](#)

In our "Innovative Products" section, we inform you about products that are of interest to the building biology community. This is not (paid) advertising.



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☎ +49 (0)8031 353 920  
Or send us an [email](#).

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