



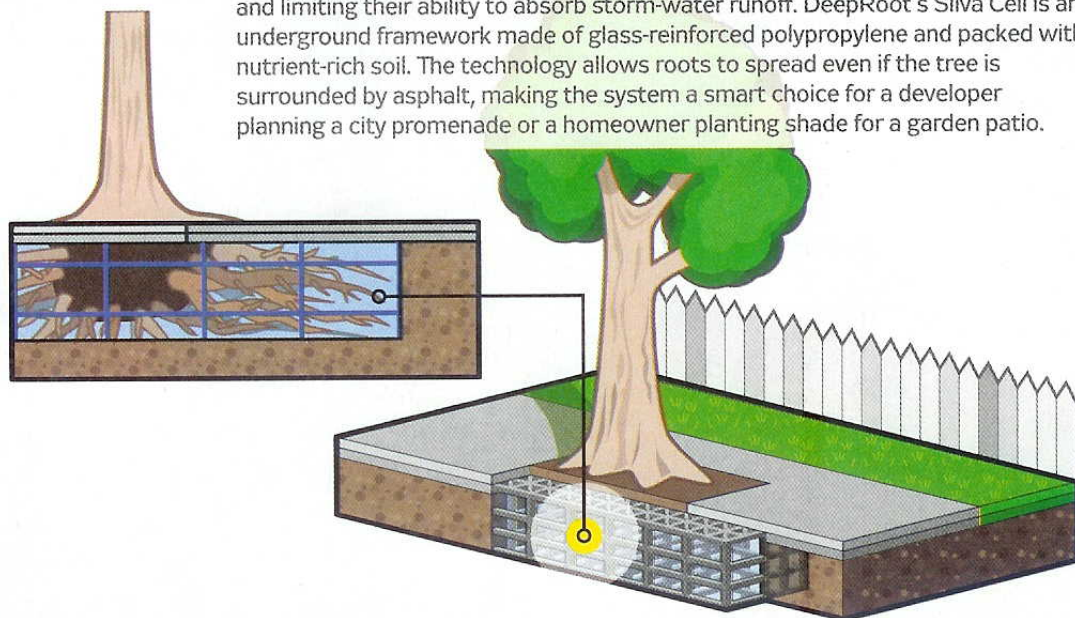
**NATUREMILL**  
Easy Indoor  
Compost

■ Compost keeps food waste out of landfills while enriching garden topsoil—but producing it at home can be a dirty job. NatureMill’s under-the-counter composter makes the whole process as easy as tossing scraps into the kitchen disposal. “I was composting in my own yard, and I liked the benefits, but I couldn’t stand the smell,” says Russ Cohn, NatureMill’s founder and CEO. As waste is mixed, heated and aerated in NatureMill’s upper chamber, a charcoal air filter neutralizes odors. Decomposed waste then drops to a lower chamber, providing fresh loads of compost every two weeks. The entire process consumes 5 kilowatt-hours a month—about as much as a typical night light.

**DEEPROOT SILVA CELL**

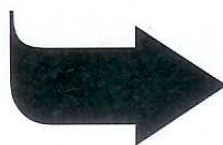
Safer Sidewalks, Healthier Trees

■ The roots of trees can push sidewalks out of position, and the gravel-heavy aggregate that supports traffic above them compacts soil, stifling root growth and limiting their ability to absorb storm-water runoff. DeepRoot’s Silva Cell is an underground framework made of glass-reinforced polypropylene and packed with nutrient-rich soil. The technology allows roots to spread even if the tree is surrounded by asphalt, making the system a smart choice for a developer planning a city promenade or a homeowner planting shade for a garden patio.



**SG BLOCKS**

Shipping-Container Housing



■ Former merchant officer David Cross got plenty of exposure to shipping containers in the four years he spent cruising the world on cargo vessels. Cross saw the large corrugated-steel boxes reused as tool sheds in China, then later, as communications shelters for the military—but he always thought their “highest use” would be in housing. Thus began Safe, Green (SG) Blocks, where Cross now works as business development director. “We take instruments of trade and turn them into instruments of construction,” Cross says. They do it by cutting open several of the 40-ft long, 8-ft wide, nearly 10-ft-tall blocks and combining them to form frames for anything from simple Colonials to the chic, modern Harbinger House (left). Converting the boxes takes 95 percent less energy than scrapping and extracting the usable metal; Cross calls the adaptive process recycling on steroids. Factor in the solar panels, rainwater recycling and sustainable flooring options, and SG Blocks save much more than steel boxes.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE CHINO (SG BLOCKS)