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 Your portal to

ADOBE

**RAMMED EARTH
 PRESSED BLOCK
 SOLAR DESIGN and**
Green Building, Southwestern Style ~

Welcome! You're here because of your interest in building and owning an earth-wall home. Your questions probably center around, "will it work in my climate?", "can I do it?", "how do I begin?" or "how much will it cost?" This site exists to answer these questions and to get you started. Here are the main considerations...

THE CODES... Adobe is defined in the current International Building Codes, used across the United States. Individual states, such as New Mexico, Arizona and California, modify this code to fit their building practices. Pressed Block and Rammed Earth are generally included in these codes, which can also be modified by individual counties and cities. Adobe was often a 'sleeper' in previous codes, but with the new interest in green building, bureaucrats and legislators are eager to bring it forward and work is underway to write it into ASTM standards.

So yes, you can do it, legally speaking. In areas without codes, you have more freedom, but you should still build to a recognized standard. If your building department has little experience with earth walls, they may require that your plans be



An Adobe home near Santa Fe, NM
 Mark Chalom, architect

stamped by a licensed engineer or architect. In many areas of the Southwest, prescribed codes allow you to build to a standard, without a professional stamp. This is the case in Arizona and New Mexico, and portions of Utah, and Colorado. At present, Texas has few restrictive codes, and California, the most restrictions.

CLIMATE Most of us visualize adobe in dry, desert-like climates. In the U.S., most

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