1) **StuSie Seepark e.V.** - Freiburg dormitory with 1,200 residents situated in Sundgaualle 26, 79110 Freiburg, [more information](https://www.huettengarten-freiburg.de/), [googlemap](https://www.google.com/maps)

2) **Eco-Oikos** *(Oikos: ancient Greek equivalent for household, house, family)*

The new student residence shows how environmentally friendly housing works

Pippi Longstocking riding her horse or Karlson on the Roof – is this what you’re thinking of when you hear about a student residence located in the Astrid Lindgren Street? Long, narrow corridors, silvery steel lifts, 65 doorbell panels next to the glass front door – going around the new residence, one thing is apparent to you straight away: This new modern building is nothing like an enchanted villa. It’s rather the multi-coloured houses in the neighbourhood in this district called Vauban that remind you of Pippi’s Villa. But the digital board next to the main entrance displaying how much solar energy has been generated gives the clue to what is so special about this residence: it’s an environmentally friendly building.

In the corner of the cosy kitchen of the four-bedroom flat which Anna and David are sharing, you realize that it’s all about environmentally friendly lifestyle. There is a box labelled “Waste Paper” and a bucket labelled “Organic Waste”. The bag for recycling material called “Gelber Sack” and the collected bottles destined for the bottle bank go without saying. Waste separation is just a matter of course to these two students who both moved into the building right after the official opening in October 2008. But can it only therefore be called environmentally friendly?

“For the student union it was very important not only to build a residence which meets with the most modern standards but which also saves resources in the long run. “After all, we feel obliged to environmental sustainability”, says Renate Heyberger, vice president of the student union, which invested about 3.3 million
Euros in the new building. The stack of documents on her desk testify to the long list of different criteria that had to be met in order to turn the residence into an environmentally friendly residence. Most of them are not visible at first sight, however.

Grey water, clean environment

Like all buildings in the "green"-stronghold Vauban, this building is also connected to a central block-type thermal power station which operates mostly with CO2-neutral woodchips. Therefore, the building’s CO2 emission is about 70 percent lower than that of a house of the same size with a conventional gas heating. Water is heated by means of a long-distance thermal energy supply and a heat-exchanging device in the cellar of the five-story building. All water pipes are carefully insulated in order to avoid energy loss during transport to the bathrooms and kitchens. The water used for flushing the toilets, however, comes from a different source: for this purpose domestic waste water from sinks, wash basins and showers is recycled, and produces the so-called “grey water”. What is the result? A reduced water and energy consumption. Photovoltaic panels on the roof are actually a matter of course for the “solaruniversity” of Freiburg. In order to avoid mould on the walls there are valves in the windows and special aerators in the bathrooms which are permanently responsible for fresh air exchange and thus prevent excess humidity in the rooms.

A modern hippie district

Quite astonished, David who is studying Sinology and computer science in his first term, throws a glance at the kitchen window. He did not know that there are valves controlling the flat’s airing. He only noticed that the windows are well isolated and that everything appears to be fairly modern. He did not really realize so far the environmentally friendly features of his buildign. “Although, it is not surprising,” he says laughing. “We actually live in a kind of hippie district here. The people do their shopping at Alnatura (an organic supermarket) and the children wearing dreadlocks do their handsprings on the playground.” Even though this student has only been living in Freiburg for a couple of months he at once noticed the typical “out-of-the-ordinary” lifestyle. “But more diversity would be quite nice, too,” David thinks. His flatmate Anna, however, took notice of the solar board at the main entrance, “but I didn’t know that this is supposed to be an eco-residence”, the 23-year-old says. She came for this term from Siegen to Freiburg University in order to get her Master in British and North American Cultural Studies. Actually, she didn't want to move into a student residence but the “price war on the private housing market” really frightened her off. She pays a rent of 280 Euros for her 17 square metres room in this shared flat and this includes telephone, Internet and TV access. But it’s the area which is especially attractive for Anna. The tram stop is 2 minutes away, and so are all the necessary shops. “Now I am glad that I was given this room in the new student residence. I applied for it already in July and noticed that they are much sought-after”, says Anna. And the fact that she ended up in Freiburg’s version of a hippie district does not annoy her: “This area is really exemplary as far as environmental consciousness is concerned. I am always upset when people don’t sort their waste, for instance. This seems to happen rather seldom here in Vauban.”

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