

Tiny Off-Grid Cabin in Maine is Completely Self-Sustaining

Posted By [Andrew Michler](#) On January 25, 2013 @ 12:46 pm In [Architecture,carousel showcase,Sustainable Building](#) | [27 Comments](#)



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A project 30 years in the making, this tiny [off-grid retreat on a coastal island in Maine](#) ^[2] is almost entirely self-sufficient. Designed and built by [Alex Porter](#) ^[3] for her father, the project features a shed roof and is wrapped in a distinctive blue-grey corrugated skin. [Dwell](#) ^[2] recently profiled the home, which is the only [solar-powered](#) ^[4] retreat on the isolated island – its sustainable power source actually makes life a lot more leisurely, as the family does not need to schlep in fuel to run a noisy generator. They didn't give anything up, as they have all the conveniences of a regular home – but with a view you don't get in an everyday residence.

The house is situated on a tiny sleeve of rock tucked close to the water. The sturdy steel cladding was chosen for a good reason: the northern squall can be relentless. The [cabin](#) ^[6] has a series of rolling storm panels that ward off the elements. When the sun shines, a small solar-electric panel mounted to the southern facing roof feeds 12v DC to the batteries, which in turn powers lights, a super efficient [Sunfrost Refrigerator](#) ^[7], and a small water pump. A large rainwater catchment tank provides more than enough water for the home, and a small on-demand water heater supplies an outdoor shower and the sink.

Given the remote location of the property and the site's lack of power, the design made careful use of all materials so that everything is spaced on 24-inch centers. Most of the finishing materials were sourced locally and floated in. One big question remains — what to do when you need to use the loo? A Sun-Mar ^[10] composting toilet does the job, transforming the waste into fertilizer. While none of the systems are ground-breaking, the design is a transparent example of how well off-grid living can work, and how we can live in nature without polluting it.



Source: <http://assets.inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2010/12/new-171.jpg>