



LEED v2.0 Energy Credit 4: Ozone Depletion
Charge to TSAC from LEED Steering Committee
Date 21 September 2001

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Back Ground

Energy Credit 4 is interpreted by a number of commentators as inconsistent with prevailing scientific views. The basis for concern is that although the Ozone Depletion Potential of commonly used HFC's are not much less than some commonly used HCFC's, the Global Warming Potential of the same HFC's can be significantly higher than that of the same commonly used HCFC refrigerants. By precluding high-efficiency/low ozone depletion HCFC equipment, commentators believe the credit could result in fewer environmental benefits.

In contrast, the USGBC Board ruled that this credit should stay as written two years ago. This decision was made because when LEED is used as a whole system, as intended, Energy Credit 1 appropriately reflects the reduced GWP of more energy efficient buildings and this should more than offset any small increase in the GWP of using an HFC over the life of a building. For example, the Board noted that while Energy Credit 4 is the *only* one of 69 credits that specifically focuses on ozone protection; at least ten other points can be attained directly for energy efficiency and global warming. Additional points minimize energy uses and global warming through transportation options and renewable energy.

Charge to TSAC

The LEED Steering Committee charge the TSAC of USGBC with the following tasks:

To review all of the atmospheric environmental impacts arising from the use of halocarbons in HVAC equipment and recommend a basis for LEED credits that gives appropriate credit to the alternatives.

The review should consider:

- The direct effect of leaked halocarbons on the atmosphere (including but not necessarily limited to ozone depletion and global warming potential)
- The indirect effects on the energy efficiency of equipment in operation and the consequential effects on atmospheric environmental emissions and impacts (including but not necessarily limited to global warming potential)