



PRESS RELEASE

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USGBC and Sierra Club Volunteers Lead Green Building Tours Across the U.S.

Tours showcase buildings as source of significant economic and environmental opportunity

March 16, 2010 (Washington, DC) –Local volunteers of the Sierra Club and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) will conduct public tours of green buildings across the country to highlight the local economic and environmental benefits of energy-efficient, high-performance green buildings. The tours are part of the national “Green Buildings for Cool Cities,” a partnership between the Sierra Club and USGBC. The project is aimed at helping cities nationwide make green buildings and communities a key component of their economic and environmental recovery efforts.

The buildings on the tours include both LEED-certified projects and those pursuing certification. Venues range from homes, banks and schools, to commercial offices, municipal buildings and neighborhoods and will take place throughout Memphis, Tenn.; Charlotte, N.C.; Fort Collins, Col.; San Jose, Cal.; Reno, Nev. Denver, Col.; Greater Milwaukee, Wis.; and Augusta, Maine.

“Touring a high-performing green building is an opportunity to experience firsthand its benefits—from energy, water and money savings, to the cleaner air and abundant daylight that makes them healthier places to live, work and learn,” said Roger Platt, USGBC’s Senior Vice President for Global Policy and Law.

“Buildings contribute nearly 40% of global warming emissions and consume over 70% of electricity used in the U.S., so they present a tremendous opportunity as we look for ways to reduce energy costs, greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution – not to mention create jobs in the emerging clean energy economy,” said Glen Brand, director of the Sierra Club’s national Cool Cities program.

Green buildings can reduce energy consumption by 26% and greenhouse gas emissions by 33%, compared to new structures built to conventional construction methods. Investments in green buildings on average result in 6.6% improvement on return on investment, 8% reduction in operating costs, and a 7.5% increase in building value. Improving the energy performance in existing buildings can reduce energy use by as much as 30% or 40%, with the ability to earn back those investments through lower utility bills over time.

For more information on the “Green Buildings for Cool Cities” project, see www.coolcities.us and www.usgbc.org/government.

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SELECTED “GREEN BUILDING FOR COOL CITIES” TOURS

Charlotte, North Carolina

Tour of North Carolina's first LEED for Homes low-income, multifamily development. The 55-unit Cherry Gardens Senior Apartments is pursuing certification under the LEED for Homes rating system. For more information, contact Beth Clark at 704-575-4482 or Daria Millburn at 704-936-9433.

Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Tennessee

Tour of Big River Engineering and Manufacturing, a downtown LEED Silver retrofitted building housing a medical instruments manufacturer. In addition, there will be tours in seven other cities throughout Tennessee, including Nashville, Murfreesboro, Cookeville, Crossville, Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Johnson. For more information, contact Stephen Sondheim at 901 761-1793 or Elizabeth Eason at 865-368-5075.

Denver and Fort Collins, Colorado

Tour of Denver's Wellington Webb Municipal Office Building, which is LEED Gold and Energy Star certified, and designed to be 25 percent more energy efficient than a conventionally built building. In Fort Collins, the tour will be at the Poudre Fire Authority Station #4, which is seeking LEED certification. For more information, contact Jonah Fruchter at 303-945-1152 or Patti Mason at 303-454-3391.

San Jose, California

Tour of the Integrated Design Associates Inc headquarters, the first commercial office building in the U.S. designed to meet a net-zero energy/ net-zero carbon emissions goal. For more information, contact Julio Magalhaes at 650-390-8441.

Augusta, Maine

Tour of the new Hannaford's supermarket, the world's first LEED Platinum supermarket. For more information, contact Glen Brand at 207-272-0484 or Katy Charette at 207-329-0700.

Brookfield, Wisconsin

Tour of Environmental Systems Inc. (ESI) facility seeking LEED certification. For more information, contact Rosemary Wehnes at 414-828-1357 or Sue Loomans at 414.224.9422.

Reno, Nevada

Tour of three buildings, including the city's first certified Gold LEED commercial building, and green buildings on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. Contact David von Seggren at 775-303-8461

U.S. Green Building Council

The Washington, D.C.-based U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings.

With a community comprising 80 local affiliates, more than 18,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 140,000 LEED Professional Credential holders, USGBC is the driving force of an industry that is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product from 2009-2013. USGBC leads an unlikely diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students.

U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

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Buildings in the United States are responsible for 39% of CO₂ emissions, 40% of energy consumption, 13% water consumption and 15% of GDP per year, making green building a source of significant economic and environmental opportunity. Greater building efficiency can meet 85% of future U.S. demand for energy, and a national commitment to green building has the potential to generate 2.5 million American jobs.

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