



LEED and the Hospitality Industry

1800 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
T: 202 828-7422
F: 202 828-5110
www.usgbc.org

Can hotels, motels, resorts and other hospitality facilities use the LEED green building certification program?

Yes, LEED can be used by a variety of different space types including those in the hospitality industry. The LEED certification program includes a range of environmental and performance measures that can be undertaken by a variety of building types. In some cases there are specific modifications to LEED that recognize unique building opportunities and challenges. Currently those programs apply to the new construction of schools, healthcare facilities and retail (in pilot).

How many hospitality projects are involved with LEED?

To date, 10 lodging properties have achieved LEED certification. An additional 380 lodging projects have registered with LEED and are working towards certification. Non-lodging hospitality projects, mainly conference and convention centers, represent another area of growth: 50 such projects are currently using LEED, seven of which are certified.

Will there be a LEED certification program specific to Hospitality?

Hospitality properties can present unique challenges in certain areas of environmental performance, often due to features such as on-site amenities, food and beverage operations, convention facilities, and transient guest populations. The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has taken the first steps in identifying areas of LEED that need further attention in light of hospitality-specific circumstances and is working to develop solutions that make adoption of LEED as feasible and effective as possible for the hospitality market.

When will these refinements to LEED be available to the market?

USGBC is currently finishing an initial needs assessment of the technical and non-technical changes that would make LEED more applicable to the hospitality market. The scope of and timeline for these changes will be determined based on the initial needs assessment. It is not anticipated that any of the hospitality refinements will be available before early 2009.

The process of changing a LEED certification program is no small task. LEED is developed through an open, consensus-based process. The key elements of USGBC's consensus process include a balanced and transparent committee structure, technical advisory groups that ensure scientific consistency and rigor, opportunities for stakeholder comment and review, member ballot of new rating systems, and a fair and open appeals process. While it does take some time, the transparent process ensures industry involvement as well as the rigor, integrity, and appropriateness for the industry of the resulting requirements.



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Is USGBC's certification system refinement work focused only on newly constructed hotels?

The needs assessment examines the potential changes to all applicable rating systems, including those focused on design & construction, as well as LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance. All future refinements of the rating system will look holistically at design, construction, operations and maintenance. Improving the environmental performance of existing buildings' operations & maintenance represents a significant portion of our environmental opportunity.

Will the changes to the LEED certification program be significant?

It is anticipated that the bulk of the rating system will remain the same but that certain credits will be refined to better suit the hospitality market. In past rating system refinements, between 4 and 10 credits have been significantly adapted. In some cases, additional credits have been added.

How can I get involved?

USGBC currently has an informal advisory group (at capacity) that is providing technical input and expertise to the process. The advisory group consists of senior level technical staff from major hotel brands, design professionals, and representation from the American Hotel & Lodging Association. Other opportunities for input may be possible, particularly for subject matter experts in particular areas. To express your interest in participating and to add your name to the pool of potential volunteers please email leedinfo@usgbc.org

Should hoteliers use the existing LEED rating systems until the hospitality version is released?

Yes, hotelier use of the existing rating systems helps the industry to begin adjusting its practices and provides critical input back to USGBC as to potential future refinements for industry-specific modifications.

How can I be sure that my product or service is represented in LEED?

USGBC does not certify, promote, or endorse products and services of individual companies. Products and services do play a role in LEED and can help projects with credit achievement. (Note that products and services do not earn projects points.)

Since LEED does not specifically reference specific products or services it is suggested that you learn about the LEED Rating System to find out how your product or service can help projects meet credit requirements. Please visit www.usgbc.org for more information.