

# New Fact Sheet Released: Energy Performance in the LEED Rating System

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Every building professional knows that green building is a process, not an event. As a tool for encouraging green building, LEED reflects that reality, providing recognition of leadership in each part of that process, from design and construction to operations and maintenance.

This is often overlooked when someone refers to a "LEED Certified" building: Where a building stands in the LEED process is an important distinction. A new fact sheet titled "[Energy Performance in the LEED Rating System](#)" explains how the LEED rating systems and requirements are supported by initiatives like the [Building Performance Partnership](#) to ensure that high performance green buildings live up to their energy potential.

And it is crucially important to understand the difference between potential and actual performance, because in many situations the concepts are conflated. Most folks think of LEED buildings as the shiny new building downtown. They say "It's green!" or "It's LEED!", and it's true that the building's design and construction process has been subject to a rigorous evaluation over all categories of sustainability, and a certification level (Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum) has been determined. But that's not the end of the story, as my colleague [Lauren Riggs points out in her post](#). A building should live up to its potential, and it takes another type of building professional to drive the building into the next stage of the green building process.

The fact sheet details a crucially important tool in helping to realize a building's performance in every aspect of sustainability: LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance. LEED buildings certified through EB:O&M are certified based upon their energy consumption in addition to the measures undertaken in the other credit categories covering water, indoor environmental quality, materials, and location. The amount of certified space under EB:O&M has grown by leaps and bounds in the last few years, surpassing the rate of certification for New Construction (see the graph in the fact sheet for exactly how much and how fast). We expect this growth to continue as the building industry (and even [the President](#)) focuses on improving existing buildings.

We hope that this focus on existing buildings' performance will encourage folks to ask a follow up question about the new green building in the neighborhood: "Is it LEED EB:O&M?" A response of "Yes" to this question will mean that the building is a top performer not only in energy efficiency, but also in water efficiency, location and transportation efficiency, indoor environmental quality, etc.

Take a look at the [fact sheet](#) and feel free to post comments below. We hope it illuminates how all these initiatives are coordinated to help us reach our goal of transforming the built environment.

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