

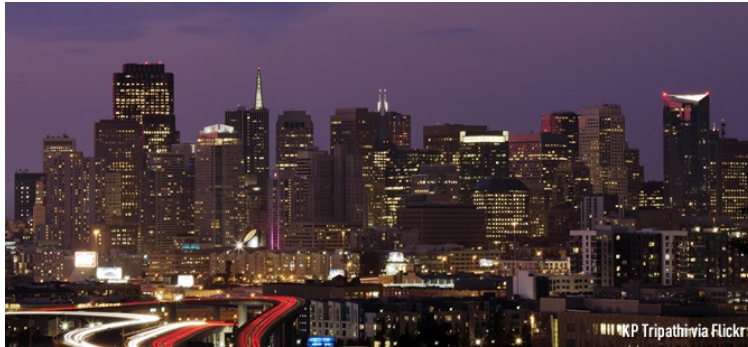


# New Analysis: LEED Buildings are in Top 11th Percentile for Energy Performance in the Nation

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Written by Ashley Katz

Posted in [Media](#)



*LEED-certified buildings in the analysis had average ENERGY STAR score of 89 San Francisco building stock among top performers*

Nov. 13, 2012 (San Francisco, Calif.) – A recent analysis performed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) shows that buildings in the sample are performing in the top 11th percentile in the U.S. in terms of energy usage and the average ENERGY STAR score for those [LEED buildings](#) is 89 out of 100 possible points. The analysis was based on LEED projects that have submitted data to USGBC both voluntarily and as required by LEED 2009.

The majority of the 195 buildings that were analyzed certified under the existing building rating system. The buildings ranged in size from two thousand to three million square feet with the average being 254 thousand square feet. The buildings were a mix of office and retail buildings.

Today's announcement comes at the start of USGBC's weeklong [Greenbuild International Conference & Expo](#) in San Francisco, Calif. and is one of several announcements around LEED building performance to be released this week.

"The ENERGY STAR data we've released gives us an indication as to where the numbers are trending. In the coming months we will be releasing additional LEED energy information," said Scot Horst, Senior Vice President, LEED, USGBC. "Green buildings provide a host of benefits and LEED has spurred significant growth in energy-efficient buildings across the globe."

"One of the critical factors in understanding building performance is collecting the data," added Horst. "While this is a challenge, we also know that our numbers indicate that the lack of data does not result in a lack of performance."

For the last two years, USGBC has been tracking the performance of LEED buildings that are reporting their energy and water use data. Consistent with these findings, these LEED projects demonstrate Source Energy Use Intensity that is on average 47% lower than the national average (as reported through EPA Portfolio Manager). Under the current version of the LEED program, USGBC requires building owners to submit energy and water use to help projects understand and improve building performance.

A recent USA Today news story noted that 92.2% of the LEED for New Construction? projects looked at for the news article are improving energy performance by 10.5% and that 89% of LEED projects are improving energy performance by 14%.

Building performance is the foundation of the LEED for Existing Buildings rating system, which is now the dominant LEED rating system based on square footage. Existing buildings are the fastest growing group of LEED buildings.

"Existing buildings consume the vast majority of energy in the U.S. and could be made much more efficient with readily available technologies and building management practices, like benchmarking," added Horst. "Most owners don't know how their buildings use energy or how they compare to similar buildings. Benchmarking gives owners a tool to measure their building's energy use and see how it stacks up to similar buildings."

"USGBC has put many measures into place that enhance building performance over the years," continued Horst. "When a new building is LEED certified, it may be based on design projections and energy modeling. Benchmarking scores do

not account for all the variances that can change building energy use, particularly operating hours and occupant density. There is also the fact that newer buildings on average use more energy than older ones.”

The San Francisco Bay Area, long known as a green building hub, is home to nearly 700 LEED-certified projects and 1261 additional LEED-registered projects in the pipeline. In San Francisco, the average LEED-certified new construction project is 25% better than ASHRAE 90.1 (1999, 2004, or 2007), the average LEED-certified existing building project has an ENERGY STAR score of 88 points and the average LEED project is Gold -- 52%. The state of California was also on this year's list of [top ten states with the most LEED-certified projects per capita](#).

LEED's prominence throughout the Bay Area made it an ideal location for USGBC's annual Greenbuild International Conference and Expo. Greenbuild is the world's largest conference and expo dedicated to green building. This week, an estimated 35,000 building professionals from all over the world will convene at the LEED Gold Moscone Center for three days of educational sessions, renowned speakers, green building tours, special seminars, and networking events.

“Sustainability is woven into the fabric of San Francisco, and this report reinforces our city's environmental stewardship and innovative leadership,” said Mayor Edwin M. Lee. “San Francisco is the Innovation Capital of the World, and we are committed to working toward a greener, healthier future for San Franciscans. We are looking forward to showcasing this vision at the Greenbuild conference.”

The city estimates that Greenbuild will pump \$32 million into the city's economy from attendee spending.

LEED is estimated to support nearly eight million jobs across all 50 states, and contributes \$554 billion to the U.S. economy annually. Today, more than 9.3 billion square feet of building space is participating in LEED with 15,000 LEED certified commercial buildings around the globe.


**About U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)** The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building certification program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities. For more information, visit [usgbc.org](http://usgbc.org) and follow us on Twitter @USGBC, and Facebook at [facebook.com/USGBC](http://facebook.com/USGBC).

#### LEED


As the most widely recognized and widely used green building program across the globe, LEED is transforming buildings, homes and communities in all 50 states and 135 countries. LEED guides the design, construction, operations and maintenance of nearly 50,000 projects worldwide, comprising 9.3 billion square feet of commercial and institutional construction space, and nearly 117,000 additional residential units. By using less energy, LEED-certified spaces save money for families, businesses and taxpayers; reduce carbon emissions; and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers and the larger community. Learn more at [usgbc.org/leed](http://usgbc.org/leed).

#### About Greenbuild

The U.S. Green Building Council's Greenbuild International Conference & Expo convenes the industry's largest gathering of representatives from all sectors of the green building movement. Three days of extensive educational programming, workshops, a vast exhibition floor and ample networking events provide unrivaled opportunities to learn about the latest technological innovations, explore new products, and exchange ideas with other professionals. Greenbuild is the four-time recipient of IMEX Green Meetings Award and the 2012 show will be held on Nov. 14-16, in San Francisco, Calif. Last year's conference in Toronto, Ontario, drew more than 23,000 attendees and featured a sold out exhibit hall floor with more than 1,700 exhibit booths. For more information, visit [greenbuildexpo.org](http://greenbuildexpo.org) and follow us on Twitter @Greenbuild, and Facebook at [facebook.com/Greenbuild](http://facebook.com/Greenbuild).



**Ashley Katz**  
Director of Corporate Communications & Marketing  
U.S. Green Building Council



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Member employees, USGBC staff

4 comments

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**Robert Marks**

2 years 4 weeks ago

If one compares two theoretically identically 25+ year-old buildings, the energy-consuming MEP systems of which are going to be equally upgraded and one of the buildings is further upgraded to qualify for LEED O+M certification (Silver or Gold), is there data to quantify whether the market value of the certified building will be further increased? In other words, can one expect LEED certification to be profitable, and; if so, what is the ROI?



**William Swanson**  
Integrated Architecture

2 years 6 weeks ago

I would very much like to see the averaged data of all v2009 new construction

projects. How much actual energy use per square foot in new LEED buildings.



**Robert Watson**  
ECON Group

2 years 6 weeks ago

Hi Ashley--Can we get a copy of the actual report, not the press release? You did a great job of summarizing, but we need the data behind it to do our 'job' of getting the message out.



**Scott Bowman**  
Owner - Building Sage, KJWW Engineering Consultants PC  
**Pro Reviewer**

2 years 9 weeks ago

I would be very interested in reading this report, but I do not see a link in the story, am I missing something?

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