

Federal Buildings Leading By Example

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Treasury Building

I'm thinking of a Federal building. It is the third oldest federal building in our Nation's capital. It houses the Federal department in charge of promoting economic growth. And, thanks to a green retrofit, it saves American taxpayers \$3.5 million every year.

It is the [Treasury Building](#). This [LEED](#) Gold project – the oldest building in the world to earn this designation – is a shining example of how green building is conserving energy, protecting the environment, and saving taxpayers money. There are now more than 800 LEED certified Federal Government projects, representing almost 100 million square feet of space.

Over the last 18 years, our organization, the U.S. Green Building Council, has worked closely with stakeholders from the public and private sectors to help them deliver the economic and environmental benefits of green building. We have seen wonderful examples of pioneering government activity as well as the pursuit of new opportunities to scale and accelerate innovation for the benefit of the broader building industry.

The Federal Government (including the military services) oversees approximately half a million buildings, and spends \$7 billion a year in energy costs for those buildings. Clearly, improving energy and resource efficiency represents an enormous opportunity to save taxpayers money and promote the uptake of cost-effective clean energy technologies and practices.

We have seen tremendous progress to date. Governments at all levels have chosen to lead by example when it comes to the construction, design and operation of their buildings.

The Obama Administration is moving forward on innovative efforts to advance energy efficient Federal buildings. The General Services Administration has its groundbreaking effort to promote a Zero Environmental Footprint. The Council on Environmental Quality launched its GreenGov Challenge and convenes the annual (and upcoming) GreenGov Symposium. And President Obama created the Better Buildings Initiative, which is working with partner organizations (including more than 100 organizations and more than 300 manufacturing plants) that represent 2 billion square feet of building space and have committed almost \$2 billion to support energy efficiency improvements in buildings nationwide.

Together, these efforts are helping build a lasting legacy, one that saves us energy, saves hard-working people money, and drives investment and jobs.

Join us later this month at the [2012 GreenGov Symposium](#) in Washington, D.C. to learn more about how this community of leaders is working together to forge ahead into new areas of green building investment, innovation, and action.

Editor's note: This article originally appeared on the [WhiteHouse.gov](#) blog.

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