

# USGBC Statement in Response to USA Today News Article

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Washington, DC – (Oct. 24, 2012) – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) issued a statement in response to the *USA Today* piece that ran today about the organization and its LEED green building program.

USGBC is a 501c3 non-profit organization that is dedicated to sustainable building design and construction. Its mission is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life.

“The LEED program has been built from the ground up by hundreds of thousands of volunteers and is the catalyst for fundamentally changing the way we think about designing, constructing and operating buildings in the United States and across the globe,” said Rick Fedrizzi, founding chair of the U.S. Green Building Council and the organization's current President and CEO. “Green buildings save energy, water and precious resources, reduce waste and carbon emissions, create jobs, save money, drive innovation and provide healthier, more comfortable spaces to live, work and learn.”

The LEED green building program has spurred explosive growth in energy-efficient buildings, which has supported almost eight million jobs across all 50 states and contributes \$554 billion to the U.S. economy annually. Today, more than 9 billion square feet of building space is participating in LEED. While LEED has propelled transformation in the building market, it cannot be stagnant and must be constantly updated. The LEED program was built in a way that ensures it undergoes a rigorous cycle of continuous improvement and evolution. USGBC is currently in this process now and taking the next big step forward with the next version of LEED.

“LEED is not and never will be a tool for mandatory regulation; it is a voluntary, market-based green building program. Many of the green building strategies the *USA Today* article is critical of are the very things that have brought thousands of large commercial real estate builders, owners, and operators into the green building discussion, resulting in millions saved and thousands of better buildings across the world. The costs of individual LEED credits are irrelevant because the market learns to deliver green buildings at little to no added cost,” added Fedrizzi.

LEED isn't perfect, but it is always improving. The program is developed by technical committees of the highest caliber and any changes to LEED are commented on by the public and must be approved through a democratic ballot process open to all USGBC members.

USGBC is proud that these measures that were once deemed exceptional are now industry standard,” concluded Fedrizzi, “That is why we keep raising the bar. We may be the only organization that has created a program that when the market really starts to like it, we make it more challenging. We develop LEED using a consensus-driven process, and while the rate of change may not be fast enough for some who would like to see more requirements that process allows us to work with the building industry to find the sweet spot that ultimately becomes the LEED rating system. We think we will have more success with the industry's help than without it.”

USGBC is currently in development of LEED v4, the fourth version of LEED, which is currently in fifth public comment. To view the drafts of LEED v4 visit [www.usgbc.org/leedv4](http://www.usgbc.org/leedv4).

## **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 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 connect on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

## LEED Green Building Program

LEED is the foremost program for the design, construction, maintenance and operations of green buildings. More than 49,000 projects are currently participating in the commercial and institutional LEED rating systems, comprising 9.1 billion square feet of construction space in all 50 states and 130 countries. In addition, more than 24,000 residential units have been certified under the LEED for Homes rating system, with more than 87,000 more homes registered.

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](http://usgbc.org).

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A graphic for LEED v4.1 featuring a central purple rectangular block with the text "LEED v4.1" in white. The background consists of a dark purple field with a grid of lighter purple lines that create a 3D perspective effect, receding into the distance.

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