

The South Central region market briefs and state snapshots

Published on **22 Jul 2013**

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Posted in **Advocacy and policy**



The USGBC South Central Regional Committee (SCRC) encompasses a vast and diverse climatological, biological and geographical area stretching across four states: [Louisiana](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Texas](#) and part of New Mexico. It's a big place, especially when one realizes that Texas is as large as France. Culturally, socioeconomically and demographically, it is as complex as it is diverse. Our region, represented by six chapters, has created opportunities for collaboration and the freedom to explore ideas for enhancing the growth of our green building movement to realize our collective vision of green buildings for all within a generation.

The [Balcones Chapter](#) has taken the lead to strategically direct the exciting work on the Texas Collaboration Initiative, enabled by a grant from USGBC. The initiative intends to enable a greater level of integration among the far-flung Texas chapters. Sharing a common resource base, our Texas groups can more effectively coordinate statewide advocacy and outreach programs. Efforts are under way to build upon the advocacy wins from the 2013 state legislative session, specifically to research and promote best practices in Texas green schools and to proliferate the Community Green program across the state.

As a further demonstration of our reach in the Lone Star State, our USGBC community is co-hosting the Clean Air Through Energy Efficiency ([CATEE](#)) conference later this year in partnership with the [Energy Systems Laboratory at Texas A&M](#).

The [North Texas Chapter](#) continues to serve the area as the “go to” source for all things green and sustainable. One particular strength is the chapter's steadfast focus on boosting visibility and recognition for projects that earn LEED certification. And our coalitions are strong, too. The North Texas Chapter has built durable partnerships with the Building Professional Institute, Baylor Medical Center, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Dallas, AIA Fort Worth, the Construction Specifications Institute, the American Society of Interior Designers and the International Interior Design Association, and is co-hosting the North Texas Sustainable Showcase.

The [Chihuahuan Desert Chapter](#) (in West Texas and southeastern New Mexico) is driving the development and adoption of a “smart code.” In addition, the chapter is expanding its local presence through biweekly LEED-focused webinars, social networking events and its sponsorship of Renew El Paso's Environmental Explorers summer camp.

The [Texas Gulf Coast](#) and [Oklahoma chapters](#) are focusing their energy and volunteer efforts on more effective organization, events and education, membership growth and alignment with the Texas Collaboration Initiative goals.

The Louisiana Chapter has launched its [Louisiana Green Schools Challenge](#), designed to engage students, teachers and administrators in making positive environmental changes in their schools. In addition, the chapter's advocacy efforts this year were instrumental in swaying the Louisiana Public Service Commission to [reinstate energy efficiency rules](#) that had been overturned in February.

Challenging economic times have clearly incubated innovative thinking in the SCRC region. We rolled up our sleeves, accepted the current conditions of the marketplace and worked together. Our region has embraced the concepts of collaboration, partnership, advocacy and community outreach as effective methods to educate the public, influence public policy and build a better foundation for a bright green building future. **Together we are stronger.**



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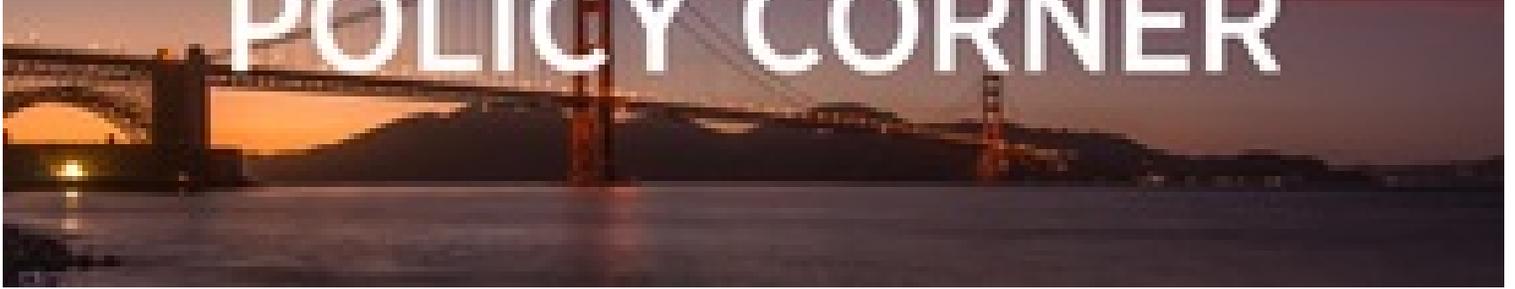
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