

What is Green Building

Overview of Green Building in Washington, D.C.

With the passage of The Green Building Act of 2006, Washington, D.C. joined states and cities across the country in requiring green building design and construction. The requirements will phase in over several years, beginning with public buildings, followed by publicly financed buildings, and ending with private construction.

Currently, the District requires compliance with the 2006 Green Communities Criteria. However, developers are encouraged to comply with the 2008 criteria.

What is Green Building?

Green building or “sustainable” building is an approach to design and construction that maximizes energy and resource efficiency, protects the environment, and promotes healthier places to live and work.

Green building is important not just for its environmental benefits, but also for its economic and health benefits. Green building reduces the everyday energy costs for owners and renters, and provides significantly better indoor air quality for occupants.

Green building considers the entire life cycle of a structure and its component parts, focusing on efficiency in operating costs, as well as initial construction costs.

The specific elements of green building include the following:

- **Integrated Design Process**- sustainable building strategies are considered from the earliest stages of project planning, with a LEED-accredited professional or experienced green building design specialist participating at every stage.
- **Location and Neighborhood Fabric**- locations that conserve resources, take advantage of existing infrastructure and civic amenities, are close to transportation and contribute to the fabric of healthy, livable communities.
- **Site Improvements**- chosen to conserve natural resources, improve operational efficiencies, enhance health and promote non-automotive means of transit.
- **Water conservation**- utilization of water-efficient appliances and fixtures, low water landscaping and irrigation, and use of rainwater and graywater (water recaptured and recycled from showers, sinks and clothes washers) when possible.
- **Energy efficiency**- a guiding principle in all stages of development, including efficient construction methods, design and insulation of units for efficient heating and cooling, use of Energy Star appliances, and efficient interior and exterior lighting.
- **Materials Beneficial to the Environment**- including reuse and recycling on the construction site to decrease waste, and use of building products and techniques that contribute to more durable, healthy and resource-efficient buildings.
- **Healthy Living Environment**- including the use on safe biodegradable materials such as Low/No VOC paints and primers, adhesives, and sealants; use of materials and construction techniques to reduce mold and ensure adequate ventilation; garage isolation.
- **Operations and Maintenance**- training for employees and residents to explain and assist in the preservation of the property’s green character.

Additional Information

Green Building Standards

Enterprise Community Partners

Green Communities Criteria

www.greencommunitiesonline.org

410.715.7433

U.S. Green Building Council

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®)

www.usgbc.org

202.742.3792

Energy Star (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy)

Energy Star Target Finder Tool

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=new_bldg_design.bus_target_finder

Energy Star Portfolio Manager

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate_performance.bus_portfoliomanager

Practical green building resources

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)

Builders' Recycling Guide: A Directory for Construction and Demolition Materials in the Metropolitan Washington Region

<http://www.mwcog.org/buildersrecyclingguide/info.htm>

202.962.3200

Affordable Housing Design Advisor

<http://www.designadvisor.org/>

Building Technology resources

U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Building Technologies Program

<http://www.eere.energy.gov/buildings/>

Sustainable Buildings Industry Council (SBIC)

www.sbicouncil.org

202.628.7400

Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH)

<http://www.pathnet.org/>

Global Green USA

www.globalgreen.org

Potential green building financial resources

Enterprise Community Partners

Green Communities

www.greencommunitiesonline.org

Washington D.C. Office: 202.842.9190

Home Depot Foundation

www.homedepotfoundation.org

National Housing Trust

Green Affordable Housing Preservation Lending Initiative

Pre-development and bridge loans

www.nhtinc.org

Contact: Keiva Dennis 202.333.8931, or kdennis@nhtinc.org