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What is green building?

Published on **6 Aug 2014**

Written by **Jacob Kriss**

Posted in **LEED**
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What is green building? It's a simple question that we get a lot here at USGBC, but not one where it's always easy to find a simple answer.

The definition of green building

Green building is a holistic concept that starts with the understanding that the built environment can have profound effects, both positive and negative, on the natural environment, as well as the people who inhabit buildings every day. Green building is an effort to amplify the positive and mitigate the negative of these effects throughout the entire life cycle of a building.

While there are many different definitions of green building out there, it is generally accepted as the planning, design, construction, and operations of buildings with several central, foremost considerations: energy use, water use, indoor environmental quality, material selection and the building's effects on its site.

LEED is green building

Sound familiar? It should, as these elements make up the basic parameters for the different credit categories within the [LEED green building rating system](#). LEED acts as a framework for decision-making for project teams in all of these areas, rewarding best practices and innovation and recognizing exemplary building projects with different levels of LEED certification.

Green building existed before LEED, and even before USGBC was established in 1993. Many green buildings ideas were being circulated and used prior to LEED's development in the mid to late '90s, but there was no central mechanism for codifying them or ensuring their effective implementation. As USGBC Senior Vice President of LEED Scot Horst [has noted](#), LEED's development grew from a recognition that, "There's all these amazing things that people are doing, so let's write them down in a list, and say that if you do so many of them, that's an environmental structure."

Today, a LEED plaque is a universal mark of distinction, signifying that the building was constructed or is being operated to be healthy, high-performing and resource efficient. More than 60,000 commercial projects worldwide are participating in LEED, with 1.7 million square feet certifying every day. LEED has also spawned an entire green building industry, expected to be worth up to \$248 billion in the U.S. by 2016.

Learn more

Visit usgbc.org/leed to learn more, and visit the [LEED project directory](#) and the [Green Building Information Gateway](#) to find green buildings in your area.

What is green building?



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krada salah eddine el ayoubi

Vefy instructive, as a lecturer I am building a tutorial as to guide studengs in monitoring the certification process



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Sony Paul

CEO, Paulantony Builders Pvt Ltd

Strong points are mentioned about the green building. Good post.



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MOHD. HABIB HASAN

DGM COORDINATION (ARCHITECT)

The article expressed the most precise definition of green building and LEED green building rating system.Special thanks to Jacob Kriss.



2 years 17 weeks ago

Karl Travis

Senior Interior Designer, Hager Design International, Inc.

A real challenge is convincing some politicians out there that think they are saving taxpayers' money by not paying for additional administration fees. By not building green, it costs the taxpayers MORE money in the long run.



2 years 18 weeks ago

Chungha Cha

CEO, Susterra Partners

Too many people think that green buildings will cost much more money than conventional buildings! Is this perceived cost barrier one of the main reasons why people are not building green?! And if so, we can show how to blast through this cost barrier so that it makes financial sense to build green!!



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Chungha Cha

CEO, Susterra Partners

Here at the Korea Green Building Council ... we are working closely with green building leaders to show that green buildings can be affordable ...



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Fery Yuliatna

Government Officer & Architects, Indonesian's Ministry of Public Work

Nice and informative article. Thank You



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Very well structured and finely written article



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Address

2101 L Street NW, Suite 500

Washington, DC 20037

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