

LEED Frequently Asked Questions June 2011

What is LEED?

- LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a program offered by the PRIVATE corporation called the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). The USGBC is NOT a government organization. Their purpose is to certify “Green Buildings”, whether residential or commercial, and have been in operation since 1997. Learn more at www.usgbc.org

What gets LEED certified?

- Commercial and residential buildings are the only things that get LEED certification.
- Pest control companies and technicians are not “LEED Certified”, but may become a “Green Associate” by taking an exam.

How do existing buildings get LEED certified?

- LEED certification is based upon attaining at least 34 total points based upon criteria set forth by the USGBC that includes materials used, energy consumption and daily operations and maintenance.

Are there different levels of LEED certification for existing buildings?

- Yes:
 - Certified – 34-42 points
 - Silver – 43-50 points
 - Gold – 51-67 points
 - Platinum – 68-92 points

What are the benefits to LEED certification for the building owner?

- Lower building operating costs over time, particularly with energy savings
- Increased Asset Value – the building becomes more in demand by renters, etc., commanding a higher price
- Reduced waste with increased use of recycled materials
- Use of “Renewable” resources – defined as “renewable within 10 years”.
- Potential Tax benefits – federal, state, or local levels

How does the PMP fit in with LEED building certification?

- For existing buildings, a PMP will be involved in the Operations / Maintenance of the building, where 1 point is available for “Indoor and Environmental Quality”.
- For new construction, a PMP may be involved in pre-treatment.
- The PMP may also become involved in “Innovations in Operations” which can offer up to 4 additional points to building owners. To qualify this means the implementation of “significant and measurable environmental performance” in other ways not specified by the LEED program.

How can a PMP provide additional points to building owners through “Innovations in Operations?”

- There are two factors that determine whether additional credits for Innovation are earned – one the PMP can control and the second they can only influence:
 1. Skill of the IPM plan writer - applicant will have to show that their IPM plan includes items that go beyond the basic minimum requirements of the credit and that bring additional environmental benefits.

For example, bar coding monitors and areas of the building and providing a "paperless", or electronic, record of services, materials applied, pest population counts, etc. with the obvious environmental benefit being reduction of paper.

2. Attitude of the evaluator – as this point assignment is somewhat arbitrary, it will be largely determined by the evaluators perception of the innovation and importance of IPM plan to the overall certification.

Is one point really that important to a building owner?

- Yes, especially for buildings where higher certification is pursued (Gold and Platinum). Owners will be looking for every opportunity to obtain points.

How does the PMP benefit from conducting IPM in LEED-certified buildings?

- The PMP builds his credibility as a professional, an understanding of green pest management, and a reputation for being concerned with Green issues.

What does a PMP have to do to earn a point for existing building LEED certification?

- As mandated by Credit 3.6 in the Green Building Operations & Maintenance manual, "Green Cleaning – Indoor IPM," is implemented by the PMP.
- The intent of Indoor IPM is to reduce exposure of occupants of the building to potentially "hazardous substances."
- "Hazardous substances" can include pest waste materials, allergens, and pathogens they may transmit
- IPM may also be associated with erosion control and landscape management, so the PMP can also consult in these areas and add to the points available for the accreditation.

What are the key elements of an IPM program in a LEED certified building?

- "Develop a written IPM plan that protects the building's occupants and offers a lower environmental impact. Incorporate integrated methods, routine site inspections and maintenance, routine pest inspections, pest population monitoring, evaluation of the need for pest control, and 1 or more pest control methods." (O&M)
- Specify what circumstances an emergency application of pesticides can be conducted.
- Outline a communication strategy directed at building occupants that addresses universal notification if more toxic pesticides are used.
- Diligent record keeping to demonstrate ongoing compliance with the IPM plan.(O&M)
- Refer to LEED-Online for complete descriptions of all required steps and documentation.

What if a pest problem is identified in a LEED certified building?

- Investigate existing preventive measures for gaps or shortfalls.
- Employ baits, traps and other control strategies before considering use of pesticides.

Can a PMP use pesticides in LEED certified buildings?

- Yes, when necessary species-specific and least toxic pesticides can be used. In extreme conditions pesticides not considered "least toxic" may be used so long as proper notice is given.

What type of pesticide is considered "least toxic?"

- Any pesticide that meets San Francisco's Tier 3 hazard criteria is considered a least toxic pesticide.
- Non-rodent pesticides that are used in self-contained baits and placed in accessible locations.

- Rodenticides – are NEVER considered “Least Toxic,” regardless of the active ingredient and for neither indoor nor outdoor use.
- Soil Termiticides – are NEVER considered to be “Least Toxic.”

Can a PMP use pesticides not considered “least toxic” in existing LEED certified buildings?

- Yes, so long as universal notification to all facility occupants is provided at least 72 hours prior to application in normal conditions and within 24 hours after application in emergency conditions.
- Circumstances must be specified before hand in the IPM plan which emergency applications are allowable.

What specific information must be provided in a universal notification?

- Pesticide product name, AI, product label signal word (i.e. “Caution”)
- Time and location of the application
- Contact information for people seeking more information

Where can I find pesticides that meet the San Francisco “Least Toxic” designation?

- Follow this http://www.sfenvironment.org/downloads/library/20100420_sf_pesticide_list_red_legged_frog.pdf