FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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LEED® for Homes™ FAQ for Builders / Developers

What is LEED?

LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification program, providing third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance, increasing energy savings, water efficiency, and carbon emissions reduction, stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts, and improving indoor environmental quality.

What is LEED for Homes?

LEED for Homes is a consensus-developed, third party-verified rating system that promotes the design and construction of high-performance green homes. LEED for Homes measures a home's performance based on eight categories: site selection, water efficiency, materials & resources, energy & atmosphere, indoor environmental quality, location & linkages, awareness & education, and innovation. Within each of these areas, projects earn points toward certification.

Each LEED-certified home undergoes onsite inspections and thorough performance testing to ensure proper performance. LEED for Homes is applicable to single family and multifamily homes and is intended for both market-rate and affordable housing.

Why should I build a LEED-certified home?

LEED certification recognizes and celebrates *leadership* in green homebuilding, and allows you as a builder to clearly differentiate your work. For the homebuyer, LEED is like the nutrition label that demonstrates in measurable terms that a home incorporates efficient techniques and features, and that the final product has been third party-verified and performance tested.

What is the difference between LEED for Homes and other green home programs?

LEED is a national, third-party certification system for green homebuilding. It is designed to recognize leadership, so the program is rigorous and focused on measurable results. LEED for Homes features lots of support for builders who choose to work with the rating system, including Reference Guides, instructor-led workshops and online courses.

There are many other highly regarded local and regional green home building programs in the U.S. Each of these programs is unique, with its own specifications and requirements. By reviewing the checklists for LEED and other available green programs, you can choose the rating system that works best for your goals.

Who is responsible for rating a LEED-certified home?

Each LEED for Homes registered project is inspected by a LEED for Homes Green Rater under the guidance of a LEED for Homes Provider. Providers and Green Raters are local organizations and individuals with demonstrated experience with green building.

A LEED for Homes Provider has three primary roles in a given market:
- Marketing LEED to builders;
- Providing green home rating support services to builders;
- Coordinating a team of LEED for Homes Green Raters.

LEED for Homes Providers are located around the country and selected by USGBC through a periodic RFQ process to support builders through the LEED certification program. They have

demonstrated outstanding abilities and have a proven record of supporting builders in the construction of high performance, sustainable homes. See the list of LEED for Homes Providers at www.usgbc.org/homes.

How do I participate in the LEED for Homes certification program?

1. **Connect** with the LEED for Homes Provider of your choice. They'll walk through the checklist with you so that you can see how LEED for Homes applies to your project..
2. **Set your project goals**. LEED is a flexible system, so you'll need to choose which credits are aligned with your project's goals. Your goals should include which level of LEED certification – Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum – you're aiming for.
3. **Register your project**. You can register your project online through the USGBC Web site. Registration fees apply.
4. **Document and verify**. Working with your Provider, a Green Rater will complete onsite inspections of the project to document that you've met the LEED credit requirements.
5. **Certify**. Once your project is complete and your documentation is ready, your Provider will submit your final LEED checklist to USGBC for certification. Following a rigorous review, your project will be awarded its final certification.
6. **Celebrate!** We want to help you to celebrate your achievement with a certification packet you can share with your homebuyer and a Marketing toolkit to shares the good news with your community.

How much does it cost to participate in LEED for Homes?

USGBC has worked hard to keep registration and certification fees as low as possible for participation in the LEED for Homes program, with the combined fees as low as $375. More information on these fees can be found at www.usgbc.org/homes.

LEED for Homes requires completion of on-site inspections prior to certification, so additional Provider and Green Rater verification costs will apply and are based on market prices. Please consult the Provider of your choice for applicable rates and fees.

Need more information?

For more information, please visit www.usgbc.org/homes, send us an email at Homes@usgbc.org, or call (800) 795-1747.