



## **Going Green Can Get You Some Green**

By Dan Rohletter

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a voluntary national rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council for developing high performance, sustainable buildings. LEED emphasizes state of the art green strategies in five particular areas: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, and indoor environmental quality.

The mission statement of the LEED program encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted standards and performance criteria. LEED standards contain three principal types of requirements. Prerequisites, which are required elements, all of which must be met before a project can be considered for LEED Certification. Second, are Core Credits which are specific actions a project may take in the five areas described above. All Core Credits are voluntary, but each level of LEED certification (i.e., Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum) requires that certain thresholds be met. Third, are innovation credits. Extra credit may be given for exemplary performance beyond Core Credit performance levels or implementation of innovative actions that confer significant environmental benefits not covered in the ratings system.

“Green” buildings provide a host of financial and other benefits to its owners, the environment and the community at large. They typically reduce operating costs and enhance asset value and profits.

But don't take just my word for this. Two recently released studies have validated that third party certified buildings outperform their conventional counterparts across a wide variety of measurements, including occupancy rates, sale price and rental rates. According to one study, LEED buildings command rent premiums of \$11.24 per square foot over their non-LEED peers and have 3.8% higher occupancy rates. For a 10,000 square foot building, this alone translates into an extra \$112,400 of annual rental income. In the sale of LEED buildings, it was found that they commanded \$171 more per square foot. For further information, contact Dan Rohletter at CPM or visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).