

LEED for Homes Certification

LEED stands for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System which was designed to encourage, develop and expand sustainable green building practices through a national and international standard of criteria. It is a third party certification program, accepted nationally, with ongoing development by professionals involved in the green building community and overseen by the [US Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](#).

LEED provides a benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance sustainable buildings, ranging from small residential homes to large commercial buildings and multi-building campuses. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by focusing on five key areas of human and environmental health, including sustainable site development, water conservation, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor air quality. LEED homes have lower energy and water bills, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and fewer problems with indoor pollutants.

The LEED for Homes Rating System

The LEED for homes rating system measures the overall performance of a home using eight categories. The system works by requiring prerequisites for each category and awarding points for improved performance. The level of performance is designated by four levels- Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum- according to the number of points earned. For an overview and detailed description of credits for each category, download the [LEED for Homes Rating System](#), provided by the USGBC.

Points required for LEED certification levels

Certified 45-59 points
Silver 60-74 points
Gold 75-89 points
Platinum 90-136 points

Ensuring compliance with the LEED rating system involves researching a large number of building materials and products to determine their environmental friendliness and their ability to qualify for LEED points. Acceptable environmental standards that we look for in choosing products and materials include factors such as recyclable content, energy savings, water savings, indoor air quality, and point of manufacture. The eight categories for the LEED for Homes Rating System include:

Innovation and Design Process (ID)

This category includes special design credits, unique regional credits, measures not currently accounted for in the LEED rating system, and exemplary performance levels.

Location and Linkages (LL)

This category includes credits for the placement of homes in socially and environmentally responsible ways in relation to the larger community.

Sustainable Sites (SS)

This category provides credits for the use of the entire property as so to minimize the project's impact on the site.

Water Efficiency (WE)

This category provides credits for water conservation practices both indoor and outdoor.

Energy and Atmosphere (EA)

This category provides credits for energy efficiency, particularly focusing on the building envelope and the heating and cooling system design.

Indoor Environmental Quality (EQ)

Credits in this category are provided for improvements in indoor air quality by reducing the creation of and exposure to pollutants.

Materials and Resources (MR)

This category provides credits for efficient use of materials, selection of environmentally friendly materials, and minimization of waste during construction.

Awareness and Education (AE)

This category provides credits for the education of the homeowner, tenant, or building manager, on the operation and maintenance of the green features of the LEED home.