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## ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

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### **LEED for Homes FAQs for Homebuilders**

#### **What is LEED?**

LEED is a national third-party certification system that recognizes leadership in green building. It is developed by a consensus process by volunteer members of the U.S. Green Building Council who contribute their expertise to its technical development. LEED was first introduced in March 2000 for new commercial construction, and has since grown to include specialized versions for homes, neighborhood development, commercial interiors, high-performance building operations and maintenance, and core and shell development. More than 3.2 billion square feet of real estate in the U.S. and in 60 countries are pursuing LEED certification.

LEED for Homes, which launched in February 2008, measures green homebuilding 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. LEED has four levels of certification: Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum, with Platinum representing the highest level of achievement.

#### **Why should I build a LEED home?**

LEED certification recognizes and celebrates *leadership* in high-quality green homebuilding, and allows you as a builder to clearly differentiate your work.

For the homebuyer, LEED is like the nutrition label on the side of a box of crackers: It clearly labels in measurable terms that the home has healthy, green, efficient features that have been third-party verified.

#### **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 also more than 70 highly regarded local or regional green home building programs in the United States. Each of these programs is unique, with its own specifications and requirements.

By reviewing the checklists for LEED and other available local or regional programs, you can choose the rating system that works best for your goals.

**What types of homes can use the LEED certification system?**

The LEED for Homes certification system is tailored for the construction of new single-family or low-to-mid-rise multifamily buildings. Existing homes undergoing extensive renovations are also eligible to participate in the program. [Contact a LEED for Homes Provider](#) to determine if your project is suitable.

**What about remodeling projects?**

For green remodeling projects, USGBC and the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) partnered to create REGREEN, the first nationwide green residential remodeling guidelines for existing homes. The REGREEN guidelines are [available for free download](#) at [www.greenhomeguide.org](http://www.greenhomeguide.org).

**What about affordable housing?**

Affordable housing is also addressed by LEED for Homes, and funding from a generous grant from The Home Depot Foundation is available to help offset costs associated with LEED certification, including local rating and verification services. [Contact a LEED for Homes Provider](#) and visit [www.greenhomeguide.org/affordable](http://www.greenhomeguide.org/affordable) for more information.

**How can I participate in LEED for Homes?**

First, check out [www.usgbc.org/LEED/homes](http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/homes) to download the LEED for Homes Rating System and Checklist. These documents are an easy way to familiarize yourself with the program, so you can decide if you want to take the next step and register a project.

**OK, so I'm ready to register a project for LEED for Homes certification...**

- **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. Your Provider will also help you complete a HERS rating or other onsite inspections that may be required to submit your project for LEED certification.
- **Set your green goals.** LEED is a flexible system, so you'll need to choose which credits are aligned with your project's green goals. Your goals should include which level of LEED certification – Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum – you're aiming for.
- **Register your project.** You can [register your project online](#) through the USGBC Web site. Registration fees apply.

- **Document and verify.** Working with your Provider, you'll need to complete a HERS rating (if necessary), and onsite inspections of the project to document that you've met the LEED credit requirements that reflect your green goals.
- **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.
- **Celebrate!** We want to help you to celebrate your achievement with a certification packet you can share with your homebuyer and a PR toolkit to shares the good news with your community.

### **How can I stay up to date on the progress of LEED for Homes?**

Get involved in one of the many USGBC committees. USGBC members interested in LEED for Homes Committee activities can join the LEED for Homes Corresponding Committee e-mail listserv. Just sign up online in the Your Account section of the USGBC website ([www.usgbc.org/YourAccount](http://www.usgbc.org/YourAccount)). Corresponding Committee members receive committee meeting minutes, periodic updates and announcements regarding LEED for Homes volunteer opportunities.

Non-USGBC members can join a public announcement distribution list by sending a request to [homes@usgbc.org](mailto:homes@usgbc.org).

### **What does it cost to register a home with LEED?**

USGBC members are eligible to receive significant cost discounts for program participation. Registration and certification fees vary based on housing type:

#### **Single-Family**

Registration: \$150 Members/\$225 Non-Members

Certification: \$225 Members/\$300 Non-Members

#### **Multifamily**

Registration: \$450 Members/\$600 Non-Members

Certification: \$0.035/sqft Members/\$0.045/sqft Non-Members

### **What if I'm building a lot of homes all at once?**

If you're registering more than one home at a time – or a multifamily building with more than 50 units – volume pricing discounts may apply. Please contact your LEED for Homes Provider for more information.

### **How do I contact USGBC?**

LEED for Homes  
Frequently Asked Questions

You can call USGBC at (202) 828-7422. Please mention that you're a homebuilder interested in LEED for Homes, and our receptionist will transfer you to a member of the Homes team.