

FGBC PROGRAMS

Revised FGBC Commercial Standard Version Two Provides More Options

It is often difficult for smaller commercial projects to earn LEED certification. Among the typical issues they face are the LEED prerequisites for commissioning, various ASHRAE standards, and the overall burden of documentation. To address these obstacles the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) released the Florida Green Commercial Building Standard in 2004 to encourage smaller-sized commercial projects to adopt sustainable strategies. Version Two of the FGBC Green Commercial Standard is scheduled for FGBC Board review next month, with a scheduled release date of January 2010.

To develop the revised standard, the task force used a hypothetical, small, stand-alone building, ABC National Bank, as its case study. For each measure, the group asked the question, “would or could ABC National Bank attempt to earn this credit?” If the answer was “no,” the group collaborated to find a way for the project to at least attempt to secure it. For example, to earn Alternative Transportation credits, the current version of the standard requires both bike racks and shower facilities. To help projects that couldn’t do both, the task force split the credit to encourage incorporation of at least one option.

Also in the proposed modification is the lowering of almost all introductory thresholds for points. Currently, Construction Waste Management and Resource Reuse have 50 percent and 5 percent, respectively, minimum requirements for one point. The proposed new minimums are 25 percent and 3 percent, respectively, for one point. Upper limits also increased. Certified Wood currently only has a requirement of 50 percent. The new standard proposes 25, 50, and 75 percent thresholds. Multiple certification levels (Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum) are also being recommended.

The points earned for a credit will no longer be awarded linearly. Each increase in performance will result in an increase in total points earned for each threshold. For the Certified Wood example, the proposed points earned

would be 25 percent = 1 point, 50 percent = 2 points (3 cumulative points), and 75 percent = 3 points (6 cumulative points). Commissioning is still a prerequisite for FGBC. However, for projects less than 20,000 sq. ft., the commissioning authority can be someone with the A/E/C firm and a member of the project team. For 20,001–49,999 sq. ft. projects, the commissioning authority can be someone with the A/E/C firm but not a member of the project team. For projects larger than 50,000 sq. ft., the commissioning authority must be independent of the A/E/C firm. In all cases, the commissioning authority may be a qualified employee or consultant of the owner.

The most unique modification is the creation of an optional prescriptive path. All 46 measures of this track are essentially prerequisites. This straight-forward approach for a basic certification requires minimum levels of environmental benefit be provided by the project in all seven categories of the standard: Energy, Water, Site, Health, Materials, Disaster Mitigation, and General.

The overall goal for Version Two is to make the criteria more Florida-specific and to provide a certification path for all commercial structures, but specifically for smaller projects less than 50,000 sq. ft. As local governments strive to comply with state-mandated green building requirements, they should find this standard a good, economical fit.

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INDUSTRY EVENTS CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 5-7, 2009

Design-Build Institute of America 2009 Design-Build Conference & Expo
Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center
Washington, D.C.
www.designbuildexpo.com

NOVEMBER 11-13, 2009

GreenBuild
The Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, Ariz.
www.greenbuildexpo.com

NOVEMBER 14-15, 2009

E-Fest
Sarasota Polo Club
Lakewood Ranch, Fla.
www.efest.us

JANUARY 20-24, 2010

Florida Association of Realtors Mid-Winter Business Meetings
Renaissance Orlando Resort
Orlando, Fla.
800-669-4327

JANUARY 26-27, 2010

FGBC Certifying Agent Course
Jacksonville, Fla.
www.floridagreenbuilding.org/certifying-agents

FEBRUARY 25-26, 2010

MiaGreen
Miami Beach Convention Center
www.miagreen.com
mail@MiaGreen.com

APRIL 14-16, 2010

ULI Spring Council Forum
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, Mass.
www.uli.org

MAY 16-18, 2010

NAHB Green Building Conference
Raleigh Convention Center
Raleigh, N.C.
www.nahb.org

JUNE 10-12, 2010

American Institute of Architects (AIA) 2010 National Convention and Design Exposition
Miami, Fla.
www.aia.org