



# FACT SHEET

## **Green Office Guide: Integrating LEED Into Your Leasing Process**

*A new publication available from the USGBC – TALKING POINTS*

*Available for sale FRIDAY August 14, 2009!*

### Overview

This guide is specifically focused on helping tenants and landlords collaborate. It will help office tenants integrate green decision-making throughout the leasing process — encompassing team selection, site selection, negotiations, lease language, build-out and the tenant’s ongoing operations within the leased space.

The information and practical tools in this guide have been developed to assist tenants and their service providers (brokers, consultants, attorneys, design professionals) in reducing the environmental impact associated with real estate decisions and operations. The information contained within will also be useful for landlords and developers interested in preparing for negotiations with an understanding of the needs of tenants focused on obtaining LEED certification for their build-out.

The first two sections of the guide provide critical background information, highlighting opportunities and challenges at various stages of the process. The third section consists of functional tools that can be adapted and adopted for use in the leasing process.

### Audience

Primary: Office Tenants & their service Providers (brokers, consultants, attorneys, design professionals)

Secondary: Office landlords & developers

### Price

Available for sale at [www.usgbc.org/publications](http://www.usgbc.org/publications)

	1-25 Guides	26-50 Guides	51+ Guides
<b>Member</b>	<b>\$40</b>	\$35	\$30
<b>Non Member</b>	<b>\$55</b>	Not	Available

### Functional Tools Within the Guide

- **LEED for Commercial Interiors Scorecard**
- **Basic Environmental Impact Questionnaire**
- **Sample Criteria for Qualifying Project Team Professionals**
- **Sample Green Building RFP Questions**
- **Building Questionnaire for Tenants Seeking LEED for Commercial Interiors Certification**
- **Sample Lease Provisions**
- **Sample Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy for Tenant Operations**

### Excerpts & Examples from the Green Office Guide

#### *Corporate Environmental Goals*

- By articulating your organizations environmental goals, one can better understand how the firms real estate serves to help or hinder those goals. This allows for more thoughtful leasing activity that aligns with environmental initiatives.
- Sustainability is most successful when it is integrated within and throughout an organization. When treated as an “add-on” such as an assigned task or the exclusive duty of an individual or even department, it is much less successful.

- *Everyone* is responsible for and must contribute to implementing the company's environmental strategies. This applies to employees as well as the organization's contractors, vendors and suppliers.

#### *Leasing*

- Successful lease negotiation is a 2 way street. Costs and benefits of green building practices should be shared by both landlord and tenant.
- The other half of going green is staying green. To ensure perpetuation of green benefits over time, a landlord's obligation to properly maintain green building systems and adhere to green practices should be addressed in the lease agreement.
- Consider a long term lease (>10yr) – for a greener lease.
- Use a qualified team. It is essential that the company's real estate team, including the broker, the attorney and any consultants, comprises experienced LEED professionals who can assist in surveying comparable buildings and negotiating with the landlord - will ensure that the lease language aligns with the tenant's environmental strategies without compromising other valued lease provisions and business points.

#### *Building & Site Selection*

- Leasing space within a green building starts with site selection.
- Tenants have a great opportunity to help change the market by asking landlords about their sustainable practices and building performance.
- Seek to Renew - The greenest move is not to move. Relocating not only consumes organizational and financial resources; it consumes environmental resources. The physical move, the construction process and furniture purchases all affect the environment.
- Tenants should seek to certify their build-out, whether renewing or relocating. Because the base building has the potential to contribute LEED points, identifying the number of points and green attributes of prospective buildings should be part of the site selection process.
- Seek LEED Certified Buildings - Leasing space in a LEED-certified building and certifying the tenant build-out provides recognition and validation of an organization's commitment to reduce the environmental impact of its real estate.
- Determine how "green" is the landlord? Whether seeking to renew an existing lease or expand or relocate offices, identify early the "green behavior traits" of landlords. Inquire about both portfolio-wide green building practices and policies as well as building specific programs.
- Once the project team has been assembled, member roles and project goals should be clearly defined. Ideally, at least one initial strategy meeting would be held to reveal, at minimum, the short- and long-term corporate goals, environmental standards (existing and desired), green facility "wants" and "needs", and LEED goals. This effort creates project boundaries, defines the scope and incorporates the LEED goals for integration into all aspects of the project.

#### *Operations & Maintenance*

- Seek first to implement environmental strategies within the tenant's control. By aligning those strategies with LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance, the tenant is facilitating whole-building certification.
- A tenant approaching an existing landlord about pursuing new green operational practices should understand the landlord's sometimes competing priorities and limitations but also come prepared to educate. Communication is key.
- Changing operations and maintenance practices may cost more money; however, study after study supports improved productivity in green buildings. The tenant may have to demonstrate to the landlord that sustainability gains could be realized at little or no cost, perhaps even to the landlord's benefit, and that tenants would be willing to help pay for increased up-front or operating costs. A small increase in costs for the tenant is quickly offset by increased morale and productivity of their workforce.
- Greening a building requires the cooperation of all involved parties—building occupants, management, ownership and building service providers such as cleaning and landscape companies. It cannot be the responsibility of one party alone.