

Frequently Asked Questions on the Transition from SPiRiT to LEED:

What Is LEED? (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

The U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is the nation's foremost coalition of leaders from across the building industry working to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work. The USGBC has developed a suite of nationally recognized LEED green building rating systems which are available for new construction, existing buildings, and commercial interiors. LEED rating tools are in pilot testing for core & shell developments, homes, and neighborhood developments. LEED information is available at <http://www.usgbc.org>. The USGBC introductory PowerPoint presentation is available at URL: https://www.usgbc.org/Docs/Resources/usgbc_intro.ppt.

Why Transition from SPiRiT to LEED?

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is being used by the Air Force, Navy, GSA, state and local governments, and commercial projects. [SPiRiT](#) is based on an older version of LEED and is out-of-date. It is more cost effective to switch to the commercial standard (LEED-NC) that meets Army needs and to take advantage of the resources that the USGBC offers. Also, the infrastructure community is already comfortable applying LEED to commercial projects. All civilian and uniformed members of the Army are full members of the USGBC under an Army membership and qualify for all discounts and benefits.

The USGBC LEED H (Homes) and LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) Committees are developing rating tools of interest to Army installations. Anyone can join LEED committees as a corresponding member to receive the latest information on development of these rating tools. Contact Richard Schneider at 217-373-6752 or richard.l.schneider@erdc.usace.army.mil for information on the USGBC or committee correspondence. Comments on application of the draft rating tools to Army projects would be appreciated. There is still time to provide input to the draft LEED rating tools.

What happens to SPiRiT?

The Army will continue to use [SPiRiT](#) and achieve the GOLD rating level for all Army Family Housing new construction projects and homes built under the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) until LEED-H (Homes) is released by the USGBC. Other projects prior to the FY08 program will continue to use [SPiRiT](#) and achieve GOLD rating, unless they can achieve the LEED-NC 2.2 SILVER rating within the program amount. Project teams will use the same self-rating process described in the [SPiRiT](#) to LEED policy to rate the project at the four points in the process, and must reach consensus. (See URL for the [SPiRiT Gold Memo](#): <http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/fd/docs/Gold%20Standard.pdf>) See Memo for description of the project team and self-rating process at URL: http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/fd/virlibrary/virtualLibrary/docs/SPiRiT_to_LEED_Memo_Jan_06.pdf

I work for the Army/Corps of Engineers/at an Installation – Am I a member of the USGBC? Do I qualify for USGBC Member Discounts?

All civilian and uniformed members of the Army are full members of the USGBC under an Army membership and qualify for all discounts and benefits. Contact Richard Schneider at 217-373-6752 or Richard.L.Schneider@erdc.usace.army.mil for information on the USGBC or committee correspondence. You need the Army membership number to create a login on the "Member's Only" portion of the USGBC website, and to take advantage of the Member's Only resources and discounts.

Does each project team need to have a LEED Accredited Professional?

Every project team should have at least one member who is a LEED Accredited Professional. Project teams with a LEED Accredited Professional automatically earn one LEED credit, and tend to create projects with higher LEED ratings. It is strongly suggested that the Army hire project consultants (Planners, Architect/Engineers, Design/Build Teams and Constructors) who can assign a LEED Accredited Professional to the project to help insure the Army SDD rating will be met.

Do I have to become a LEED Accredited Professional?

No it is not required that all Army project team members become LEED accredited professionals, but it is highly recommended, and would be a good career move.

Corps of Engineers, Installation personnel, and project team members are encouraged to take the "LEED Accreditation" courses and exams offered by the U. S. Green Building Council to become LEED accredited professionals, so they can contribute their expertise to projects.

How do I become a LEED Accredited Professional?

LEED Professional Accreditation is awarded to building industry practitioners who successfully pass a comprehensive exam which tests for a detailed knowledge of LEED project certification requirements and processes and a command of integrated design principles. Visit URL:

<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CategoryID=1306> to learn more about how you can become a LEED Accredited Professional. Information on the web-based training class "Essentials of LEED Professional Accreditation" is available at URL:

<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1449> Army team members wishing to become LEED Accredited Professionals should first register in the "Members Only" portion of the USGBC website to take advantage of the available discounts and resources.

Does USGBC have web training? How much would it cost?

The only currently available online class is "Essentials of LEED Professional Accreditation."

Pricing: Members: \$150, Nonmembers: \$200. For more information please see URL:

<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1449&> (See ECB 2006-6 "[Essentials of LEED Professional Accreditation](#)" On-Line Training (CECW-CE, 20 June 2006) at URL: http://www.wbdg.org/ccb/ARMYCOE/COEECB/ecb_2006_6.pdf

Do we have to pay money to "register" Army projects with the USGBC?

The Army is not requiring project teams to register projects with the USGBC. While there is no Army requirement to register a project with the USGBC, optional registration will allow the PDT to make use of '[LEED-Online](#)' and on-line 'LEED Letter Templates' to document and track progress towards LEED goals. Documenting the project on-line allows anyone with the access information, whether a PDT member, or at HQ USACE, IMA, ACSIM, etc., to review project information. It will also offer the additional advantage of USGBC support in credit interpretation and rulings. (Registration for LEED-NC costs \$450 for members and \$600 for non-members as of 15 Nov 2005. If the PDT chooses to register and/or certify a project with the USGBC, any associated fees for project registration or building certification will be paid from project design or construction funds. For information on registering projects with the USGBC please visit:

<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=65&>

Do we have to pay the USGBC to "Certify" Army projects to determine the final LEED rating?

Are you aware of any information on the cost to LEED certify a building?

The Army is not requiring project teams to register their projects with the USGBC or seek formal USGBC certification. A project owner seeking public recognition for their project's sustainability features can do so through the USGBC's [certification process](#). They register their project for a fee with the USGBC, design and build it to meet LEED requirements, while documenting the earned credits using LEED Letter Templates. Project teams then pay an additional certification fee and submit the LEED Letter Templates and other required submittals to the USGBC for evaluation. The USGBC then rates or "certifies" the project based on its performance as 'Certified,' 'Silver,' 'Gold,' or 'Platinum,' with Certified being the minimum performance level. Fees for project certification vary by the size of the building. The USGBC recently launched a series of refinements and innovations that significantly reduce the time, cost and paperwork of achieving LEED certification, which is called [LEED Online](#). For more information on project certification with the USGBC please visit:

<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=64>

For more information on the costs to achieve LEED ratings and comply with LEED documentation requirements, please see ERDC CERL Technical Report "Implementation of the U. S. Green Building

Council's LEED® as the Army's Green Building Rating System" at URL: <http://www.cecer.army.mil/td/tips/pub/details.cfm?PUBID=5574> or the cost references at the USGBC URL: <https://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=78&> USGBC certification fee structure as of November 2005 is at URL: http://www.usgbc.org/FileHandling/show_general_file.asp?DocumentID=1108

What do we do if our customer wants their project registered with and certified by the USGBC?

The Army does not require that a project register with or seek formal certification of project scores with the USGBC; however, registration and certification costs will come out of project design or construction funds.

As construction agent to the Air Force, what does the Air Force expect for their LEED certification?

The Air Force requires selected projects to earn a LEED Certified rating, or possibly higher. Unless the customer requires the project team to pay the USGBC to register and certify the final project rating, you can follow the same USGBC process steps that you would for Army projects.

What is the difference between "Certifying" a project and the LEED "Certified" rating? Can a person become "LEED Certified?"

USGBC "Certifies" projects after they have been registered, designed and built to meet LEED requirements, and the project team has submitted LEED Letter Templates and other submittals to prove which credits have been earned. There is a certification fee which must be paid to the USGBC, which varies depending on the size of the building.

"Certified" is the lowest acceptable LEED Rating. Silver, Gold and Platinum are increasingly higher LEED ratings. In the LEED world, buildings are certified and people are accredited.

What is the applicability of these requirements to DoD funded projects located on Army Installations? Does LEED apply to tenant facilities? How do I report the rating results if it doesn't?

The LEED Silver policy applies to ALL new facilities constructed on Army installations and in the Army's military construction program regardless of fund source. The [SPiRiT/LEED®-NC](#) ratings for all projects will be reported in the USACE P2 Project database. The Army Facilities Standardization Committee has final review and approval authority for any waivers to the Army SDD policy

What are the applicability rules for non-vertical construction projects?

Horizontal construction, such as ranges, roads and airfields, will utilize [LEED®-NC/SPiRiT](#) and obtain a project rating that incorporates sustainable design to the extent feasible, for example by minimizing site impact, incorporating recycled materials, utilization of permeable pavements, etc., however these projects are exempt from the minimum rating requirement that applies to vertical construction.

What are the applicability rules for renovations and additions? If the project is a renew/renovation project and it falls within the realm of both LEED-EB and LEED-NC. Are we required to use both or simply use LEED-NC.

See paragraph 3c??. Some renovation, retrofit etc., projects consist predominantly of repair work with only a relatively small amount of incidental associated construction. This construction work is specifically identified in the DD Form 1391. These are "repair" projects, even though they may also be referred to as "renovation" projects. As repair projects, they will not be scored under LEED-NC.

How do we score projects with multiple buildings/building types? How do we do the P2 data entry for projects with multiple buildings/building types?

Projects with multiple building types shall achieve and document the required [SPiRiT](#) and/or LEED Rating level for each of the building types, however, only the rating for the primary facility (Army Category Code) will be reported. The Project Delivery Team (PDT) Project Manager is responsible at

all project phases for ensuring that a PDT consensus LEED score is established, and for recording and reporting the results. The [LEED-NC Application Guide for Multiple Buildings and On-Campus Building Projects](#) may prove useful to project teams. It is available at URL: https://www.usgbc.org/FileHandling/show_general_file.asp?DocumentID=1097. The purpose of the AGMBC is to provide direction in applying LEED-NC v2.1 and v2.2 to projects in a campus or multi-building setting such as corporate campuses, college campuses, and government installations (i.e. there is one owner or common property management and control). It is intended for projects where several buildings are constructed at once, in phases, or a single building is constructed in a setting of existing buildings with common ownership or planning with the ability to share amenities or common design features.

Where do I get a copy of the current LEED®-NC Checklist?

Please visit the USGBC website to find the LEED-NC 2.2 Checklist at: <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=220&> or download the file at https://www.usgbc.org/FileHandling/show_general_file.asp?DocumentID=1096

How can I get a copy of the LEED-NC 2.2 Reference Guide?

While free would be nice, that is not the case here. However, all civilian and uniformed members of the Army are full members of the USGBC under an Army membership and qualify for all discounts and benefits, so we can get the member price.

USGBC Members: \$150, Non-members: \$200.

LEED Workshop registrants: \$125 (when purchased with registration)

Combined with NCv2.1 Reference Guide: \$250 (members) or \$300 (non-members). To order LEED Reference Guides, please visit URL: <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=174>

I already have a tight project budget. How do we earn LEED Silver too?

First, READ the LEED-NC Rating Tool. Start early, work with your LEED Accredited Professional to identify target LEED credits, assign a team member the responsibility to follow-up on each LEED credit, and follow the example of other successful projects. Achieving LEED Silver is not that difficult if you establish LEED goals during the planning/programming charrette, identify how you will be able to achieve the energy targets, follow through during design, and convey the requirements to the contractor who builds the project. Design and Construction phase LEED credits are shown in the 2 phase LEED online submittal description at URL:

http://www.usgbc.org/FileHandling/show_general_file.asp?DocumentID=1108 Of course, there are budget limitations and the bidding climate greatly affects the final project cost, but there are Army projects that predict they will be able to earn LEED Gold ratings within project authorization. Design/Build projects may have an advantage over Design/Bid/Build projects because Design/Build teams can provide continuity and can better coordinate between the design and construction effort. (For more information on how to use LEED successfully during Army projects, please see ERDC CERL Technical Report "Implementation of the U. S. Green Building Council's LEED® as the Army's Green Building Rating System" at URL: <http://www.cecer.army.mil/td/tips/pub/details.cfm?PUBID=5574> .

Appendix A indicates the **Army Required, Preferred and Avoid LEED credits**. Credits highlighted in BLUE are required by Federal, DOD or Army policy and those highlighted in GREEN have been identified as readily achievable for the majority of Army projects. Project teams must earn all the blue required credits, and strive for as many of the green credits as possible. Many of the target credits highlighted in GREEN are no-cost or low-cost credits that have been successfully earned by other Army projects. For more information please see ERDC CERL Technical Report "Implementation of the U. S. Green Building Council's LEED® as the Army's Green Building Rating System" at URL: <http://www.cecer.army.mil/td/tips/pub/details.cfm?PUBID=5574> .

How does the Project Team Self-Rate the project to determine the projected LEED Rating?

Project teams will work to reach consensus on which LEED credits have been earned. PDT members realistically assess whether the project meets the LEED technical requirements for each credit. (For example, dirt excavated and reused on site does NOT count towards the credit for local/regional materials). Team members will provide the documentation recommended by the USGBC to

substantiate each credit. Independent technical reviews include review of LEED documentation. The Project Manager is responsible for insuring that LEED documentation is collected and saved in the project file.

The LEED Reference Guide is an invaluable resource to help project teams understand best practices for earning LEED credits. Those unfamiliar with LEED may miss easy-to-earn credits. Also, there are changes between [SPiRiT](#) (which was based on LEED 2.0) and LEED-NC 2.2 which make it easier for teams to earn several of the LEED credits but team members need to understand the differences.

Another valuable resource to help project teams understand best practices for earning LEED credits as well as for identifying potential Innovation in Design credits are LEED Credit Interpretations (CIRs). These are Available on the members only side of the USGBC website. Click 'My Account' from the USGBC main web page (log-in and look for CIRs under 'My Resources.'

What are the points in the Army Military Facility Delivery Process where we need to report the project LEED Rating?

Project Delivery Teams will 'self rate' projects at the following points in the facility delivery process using [LEED@-NC](#) (or [SPiRiT](#) if applicable):

Project Planning Charrette

Parametric Submittal / Code 3 Design

Final Design

Beneficial Occupancy / Construction Closeout

Who endorses an Army project LEED Rating? Who will make the determination that the project design achieves the LEED Silver rating?

At the four rating points, the Self Rating will be coordinated with the Installation Director of Public Works (DPW) or the Reserve Component equivalent, the USACE designated Center of Standardization (COS) if applicable, the designer and the constructor and 'endorsed' by the Installation Director of Public Works (DPW) or the Reserve Component equivalent and the USACE designated Center of Standardization (COS) if applicable. The project manager for each PDT will include the LEED scores, endorsements and supporting documentation in the project files.

What if the project scores less than LEED Silver?

(1) NON-USACE PROJECTS. When minimum required rating levels are not achieved, the Project Delivery Team's Project Manager will report the through their respective organization's chain of command to the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Installation Management (Facilities and Housing Directorate, DAIM-FD) with a copy of the LEED scoring document and an explanation as to why this level can not be achieved.

(2) USACE Projects. For Corps of Engineers managed projects, the District Project Delivery Team's Project Manager will report the issue to the Regional Integration Team (RIT) Program Manager with an explanation as to why this level can not be achieved.

Who is considered a member of the Project Team?

The Project Delivery Teams (PDTs), whether for a design-bid-build or a design-build process, must include all facility stakeholders, representatives of all parties affected by the building. In a holistic approach for sustainable design, in addition to the traditional team members, Directorate of Public Works staff, engineering staff, architects, engineers, consultants, contractors, and construction representatives, are added users representatives, LEED Accredited Professionals (AP), operations and maintenance staff, specialty consultants, construction managers, subcontractors and suppliers, historic preservation staff (if applicable), occupational health and safety staff, and any other party with the affected community who could contribute to the process. Each PDT will be formed based on unique project characteristics, facility type, and the facility

delivery process chosen, e.g. design-bid-build (DBB), or design-build (DB). (See [ERDC/CERL TR-04-19, SPiRiT Scoring Through Self-Assessment Charrettes](#)).

Project Manager
LEED Accredited Professional (AP)
Facility User Representative/Tenant
Garrison Commander or Directorate of Public Works (DPW)
Design / Engineering Team
Architect/Engineer (AE)
Commissioning Authority
Construction Contractor
Design Build Contractor
Construction Waste Manager
Construction Management Team (QA/QC)

The installation Directorate of Public Works or the Reserve Component equivalent, the COS, the supporting Engineer District or Authorized Design and Construction Agent, project manager, designer, and constructor are all team members who contribute to project success and ultimately agree by endorsing the final project LEED (or [SPiRiT](#)) rating. The installation master planner typically determines where the project site will be, which implicitly determines whether certain LEED credits may be earned by the project. Installation personnel are often the best source of expertise about topics such as storm water runoff, installation recycling programs, available materials and resources from deconstructed buildings, available energy resources and contracts, water availability, and Installation 25 Year Sustainability Goals. It is key to get these stakeholders involved early during the planning and design process charrettes to understand local constraints and opportunities. A Whole Building Design Guide chart depicting “Design Disciplines Interaction with Program Objectives/Building Systems” is available at: http://www.wbdg.org/docs/disciplines_matrix.xls “SPiRiT Team Responsibilities by Discipline” is available at: https://eko.usace.army.mil/Documents/index.cfm?id=6420&pge_prg_id=14984&pge_id=1379

Which LEED credits are no-cost/low-cost?

Appendix A indicates the recommended **Army Required and Preferred LEED credits**. Project teams must earn all the blue credits (which are supported by policy), and as many of the green credits as possible. Many of the target credits highlighted in GREEN are no-cost or low-cost credits that have been successfully earned by other Army projects. For more information please see ERDC CERL Technical Report “Implementation of the U. S. Green Building Council’s LEED® as the Army’s Green Building Rating System” at URL: <http://www.cecer.army.mil/td/tips/pub/details.cfm?PUBID=5574>

What are USACE Model Requests for Proposals?

USACE model Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are templates for RFP documents that are generated and controlled by HQUSACE and the COSs. Use of these templates is mandatory for all MILCON Transformation projects. Local revision of the template documents is not permitted without HQUSACE permission.