



LEED Canada for Homes: Frequently Asked Questions for Homebuilders

What is LEED?

LEED is a national third-party certification program that recognizes leadership in green building. It is developed through a consensus process by volunteer members of the Canada Green Building Council who contribute their expertise to its technical development. LEED was first introduced in March 2000 in the US and initially addressed new commercial construction. It has since grown to include specialized versions for homes, neighborhood developments (under 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 60 countries are pursuing LEED certification.

LEED Canada for Homes, which launched in March 2009, certifies green homes using criteria in eight different categories: site selection, water efficiency, materials & resources, energy & atmosphere, indoor environmental quality, location & linkages, awareness & education, and innovation. All LEED certified homes must meet 19 mandatory measures and a minimum set of optional measures. The green measures are verified on-site by a third-party verification team using a protocol developed by the CaGBC. 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.

What is the difference between LEED Canada for Homes and other green home programs?

There are a number of well respected local green home building programs in Canada, some of which focus on energy efficiency. Each of these programs is unique, with its own specifications and requirements. By reviewing the checklists for LEED and other local or regional programs, you can choose the Rating System that works best for your goals.

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. If you are new to green building, it may be best to start with other programs and work up to LEED. However, LEED Canada for Homes does feature lots of support for builders, including Reference Guides and instructor-led workshops. Also, every project works with a local or regional Provider that can help to guide your project successfully through the certification process.

What types of homes can use the LEED certification system?

The LEED Canada for Homes certification system is designed for new single-family homes as well as low- and mid-rise multifamily buildings. Existing homes or buildings undergoing extensive renovations are also eligible to participate in the program. Contact a LEED Canada for Homes Provider [www.caqbc.org/leed/homes/] to determine if your project is suitable.

What about remodeling projects?

For green remodeling projects that do not qualify for LEED Canada for Homes, USGBC and the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) have partnered to create REGREEN, the first US green residential remodeling guidelines for existing homes. The REGREEN guidelines are available for free download at www.greenhomeguide.org.

How can I participate in LEED Canada for Homes?

First, check out www.caqbc.org/leed/homes to download the LEED Canada 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.

I'm ready to register a project for LEED Canada for Homes certification. What next?

- **Connect** with the LEED Canada for Homes Provider of your choice. They'll walk through the checklist with you so that you can see how LEED Canada for Homes applies to your project. Your Provider will also help you complete an ERS (EnerGuide) rating and perform the onsite verification steps required 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 CaGBC Web site. Registration fees apply.
- **Document and verify.** You'll work with a third-party verification team to help them verify all green elements of the project. You'll be asked to provide product literature, design drawings, etc. and to coordinate with the verification team so they can conduct on-site performance tests and verification steps. Project team members will be asked to sign-off that various design measures were completed appropriately, and you'll fill out the project checklist with your Provider.
- **Certify.** Once your project is complete and your documentation is ready, your Provider will submit your final LEED checklist to the CaGBC 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.

What does it cost to register a home with LEED?

Registration and certification fees vary based on housing type. Discounts are available to CaGBC members and additional discounts are available for multi-home or multi-building projects. See www.caqbc.org/leed/homes/ for more details.

How do I contact the CaGBC?

You can call the CaGBC at 1-866-941-1184 or email us at Homes@CaGBC.org