

Green Building Update

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publication

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California Lawmakers Pass Bill to Curb Sprawl

The Wall Street Journal - September 2

California lawmakers passed SB 375, a bill aimed at cutting carbon-dioxide emissions by rewarding cities and counties that prevent urban sprawl and improve public transportation. The bill, which was passed Saturday, must be signed into law by Gov. Schwarzenegger. The bill's proponents and transportation experts say it is the first measure in the nation to link government transportation funding with urban planning and CO2-reduction goals. SB 375 contends that cutting back on driving is as critical in the fight against global warming as producing cleaner fuels and more-efficient vehicles. Transportation experts say they expect the bill to become a model for state and national policy makers.

Green Building Focus

Studies show contractors may overestimate green costs

Sacramento Business Journal - September 2

Studies show that constructing sustainable structures and retrofitting old ones is thought to be more expensive than the actual construction costs. However, experts still disagree on the true costs of green construction. Some studies suggest green building is a negligible expense when sustainable features are included during initial design phase, while others say it adds 10 percent or more to a project's overall budget. This range of costs is probably due to the broad spectrum of green projects. Projects can vary wildly in cost and green certification can hinge on seemingly arbitrary circumstances, such as the distance from the building to a light-rail station. California studied the cost of green buildings before the governor issued an executive order and concluded that the benefits of the mandate would outweigh the costs by a significant margin.

Green consultants become mainstays in LEED certification

New York Times - August 26

A recent seminar on the LEED certification process noted a growing cadre of consultants who specialize in helping developers, architects and tenants gain an official stamp of approval from the United States Green Building Council through its LEED certification program. "Going green used to be part of just a handful of organizations' mission statements, but now it's become part of everyone's agenda," said Ashley Katz, communications director for the Green Building Council. "That has, of course, increased the need for sustainability consultants." Midway through 2008, 1,705 buildings have been LEED certified.

Website lists all Northern California LEED projects

M.Landman Communications Consulting - September 2

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Speaker: **Ray Buddie** of Allen Matkins

About Allen Matkins

Allen Matkins Leck Gamble Mallory & Natsis LLP, founded in 1977, is a California law firm with over 240 attorneys practicing out of seven offices in California. The firm's broad based areas of focus include construction, corporate, real estate, project finance, business litigation, taxation, land use, environmental, bankruptcy and creditors' rights, and employment and labor law.

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M.Landman Communications Consulting has lists all Northern California building projects that have achieved LEED certification. In late August 2008, 112 LEED certified projects were listed on the chart. The listing is updated monthly, and is primarily compiled from the information that is provided in the searchable Certified Projects database at USGBC.org.

PECO unveils plans for a 45,000-square-foot living roof

Greener Buildings - September 2

Philadelphia-based electric and natural gas utility (PECO) unveiled plans for a 45,000-square-foot living roof atop a section of PECO headquarters. The green roof is part of the utility's five-year \$15.3 million initiative to become more environmentally friendly. When completed, the living roof will be the largest on an existing building in Pennsylvania. The living roof is expected to absorb 60 to 70 percent of the estimated 1.5 millions gallons of rainwater that fall on the roof annually.

Green "weefabs" offer affordable room-away-from-home

Green Building Elements - September 2

New green prefab homes called "weefabs" are being marketed by [kitHAUS](#) as a "room-away-from-home" for the inlaws, a quiet office or a TV room in the backyard. While many green prefab homes on the market are beautiful and innovative, and push the boundaries of green practices, most designs may not be cost-effective. Weefabs are breaking this trend due to their low cost. Most of models can be purchased without having to take out a new mortgage.

LEED certification process will be delegated to GBCI

US Green Building Council - September 2

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announced that starting January 1, 2009, it will no longer oversee the actual certification of buildings applying for LEED status. That process will be taken over by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI), an autonomous organization that already manages the LEED professional accreditation program.

Nearly 1000 US school buildings have met or are seeking LEED certification

US Green Building Council - August 27

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, nearly 1,000 school buildings have met or are seeking LEED certification, with applications growing at a rate of more than one per day. LEED certified and registered school space will exceed 100 million square feet as the school year gets underway, according to USGBC. LEED certification provides parents, teachers and communities with a "report card" for school buildings - verifying that a school was built to meet the highest level of energy and environmental performance.

US investing up to \$24 million to develop solar projects

Renewable Energy World - August 25

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced that it will invest up to \$24 million to develop solar energy products that are aimed at accelerating the penetration of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems in the United States

The Solar Energy Grid Integration Systems (SEGIS) projects will provide critical research and development (R&D) funding to develop less expensive, higher performing products to enhance the value of solar PV systems to homeowners and business owners. These projects are integral to the Solar America Initiative, which aims to make solar energy cost-competitive with conventional forms of electricity by 2015.

US, Australia and Iceland to develop geothermal systems

GreenBiz - September 2

The U.S. Dept. of Energy (DOE) formed a partnership with Australia and Iceland to develop enhanced geothermal systems (EGS), a largely untapped renewable energy source. The three countries signed the charter of the International Partnership for Geothermal Technology (IPGT) to explore policy and technical aspects of EGS, such as deep drilling and geothermal energy conversion. The U.S., Australia and Iceland will identify, research, develop and deploy projects. The partnership could be expanded to include more member countries.

Notable green building projects...

Hayward's former city hall to become city's first LEED retrofit

Hayward's former city hall, an 11-story high-rise that has stood empty for nearly 17 years, will gain new life as a 12-story office building as part of a development plan by Mika Realty Group, a Los Angeles developer specializing in adaptive reuse of aging urban structures. The redeveloped, earthquake-retrofitted building will be Hayward's first building that will be LEED certified.

Boston's largest property owner seeking LEED certification for all its office Buildings

Boston's largest property owner, Equity Office Properties Trust, is seeking LEED certification for all of its office buildings, due to rising energy cost and customer demand. "We're doing this from a social responsibility perspective, but it's also become necessary to maintain tenants," said Greg Shay, President of Boston operations for Equity Office. "It's gotten to the point where not taking action is somewhat foolish."