LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

The US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program is a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions. LEED certification provides independent, third party verification that a building, home or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at achieving high performance in key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

The 24th floor was designed and built as a healthy state-of-the-art facility, benefiting our community of valued staff while limiting harmful impact on the environment. Using the LEED framework, the 24th floor has achieved Gold Level Certification, an impressive mark of sustainable design and a model for the future of Highmark's workplaces!

Components of the LEED Rating System for Commercial Interiors

Sustainable Sites

Choosing a building's site and managing that site during construction are important considerations for a project's sustainability. The Sustainable Sites category discourages development on previously undeveloped land; minimizes a building's impact on ecosystems and waterways; encourages regionally appropriate landscaping; rewards smart transportation choices; controls stormwater runoff; and reduces erosion, light pollution, heat island effect and construction-related pollution.

In this space…

The downtown location of Fifth Avenue Place allows visitors and staff to easily use the public transit system, bicycle infrastructure, and major amenities in close proximity. By choosing to locate its offices in the dense urban environment of downtown Pittsburgh, Highmark has reduced its environmental impact from transportation, while ensuring employee access to many local amenities in walking distance.

Water Efficiency

Buildings are major users of our potable water supply. The goal of the Water Efficiency credit category is to encourage smarter use of water, inside and out. Water reduction is typically achieved through more efficient appliances, fixtures and fittings inside and water-wise landscaping outside.

In this space…

Reducing the use of water has the potential to save operating costs and reduce environmental impact. This project installed extremely efficient water fixtures that are resulting in over a 35% reduction in water use when compared to the national standard established by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Energy & Atmosphere

The Energy & Atmosphere category encourages a wide variety of energy strategies: commissioning; energy use monitoring; efficient design and construction; efficient appliances, systems and lighting; the use of renewable and clean sources of energy, generated on-site or off-site; and other innovative strategies.

In this space…

Innovative LED lighting technologies used on this floor, and throughout the building, achieve lighting power density reductions of over 40%, which helps to conserve a significant amount of energy.

Appliances and machines have been carefully selected to achieve high levels of energy efficiency in daily operations.

Materials & Resources

During both the construction and operations phases, buildings generate a lot of waste and use a lot of materials and resources. This credit category encourages the selection of sustainably grown, harvested, produced and transported products and materials. It promotes the reduction of waste as well as reuse and recycling, and it takes into account the reduction of waste at a product's source.

In this space…

Over 95% of construction waste material was diverted from landfills and distributed to recycling centers.

Preference has been given to regionally manufactured materials and furnishings. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions from transporting the materials while benefitting the local and regional economy.

Indoor Environmental Quality

Air quality indoors can be significantly worse than outdoors. The Indoor Environmental Quality credit category promotes strategies that can improve indoor air, provide access to natural daylight and views and improve acoustics.

In this space…

All of the furniture systems on the 24th floor were purchased with attention to Indoor Air Quality, and are Greenguard certified as low- or zero-emitting products. Great care was taken to ensure the furniture is good for both the environment and the health of all employees and occupants.

Innovation & Design Process

The Innovation in Design credit category provides bonus points for projects that use new and innovative technologies and strategies to improve a building's performance well beyond what is required by other LEED credits or in green building considerations that are not specifically addressed elsewhere in LEED.

In this space…

As part of its focus on creating and maintaining healthy spaces, Highmark instituted a Green Cleaning Policy for Fifth Avenue Place.

Educational content on environmental sustainability throughout the 24th floor and online at highmark.com/environment contributes to the advancement of healthy and green living in our workplaces and communities.