

Frequently Asked Questions

Baltimore expects to release the final regulations and procedures for implementation of Baltimore City's Green Building Standards in January 2010. The following list of "Frequently Asked Questions" is intended to provide guidance for building permit applicants during this interim period.

For any additional questions, please send an e-mail to:

GreenBuildingStandards@baltimorecity.gov

1. When did the requirements take effect?

On July 1, 2009 all covered buildings applying for a building permit after must be equivalent to a LEED "Silver" level.

2. What buildings are covered?

Newly constructed, extensively modified non-residential, and specified multi-family residential buildings that have or will have at least 10,000 square feet of gross floor area are "covered buildings."

- *Extensively modified* is a structural modification that alters more than 50% of the building's gross floor area.
- *Multi-family residential covered buildings* contain 5 or more dwelling units and are taller than 3 stories; or are mixed use buildings that contain a residential component and are taller than 3 stories.

3. Will covered buildings be expected to earn certification from the U.S. Green Buildings Council?

Until the release of the new Baltimore City Green Building Standards you will not be required to obtain certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). While it is not necessary for buildings to go through the USGBC official Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Project Certification process for the Baltimore requirements, this is a step that building owners may want to pursue. For more information on the LEED Project Certification process, visit the U.S. Green Building Council's website at www.usgbc.org

4. What standards should designers be using in their project development?

The City is developing its own green building standards that are specifically tailored to address the unique challenges and opportunities in Baltimore. Until the development of the Baltimore City Green Building Standards (BCGBS) is completed, the particular U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system that applies to the project should be followed. For information on the LEED rating system visit www.usgbc.org

5. What does the "or equivalent" mentioned in the legislation refer to?

The "or equivalent" refers to the Baltimore City Green Building Standards (BCGBS) that the City is developing.

6. When will the Baltimore City Green Building Standards be released?

- The City is scheduled to release the Baltimore City Green Building Standards (BCGBS) as an option in January 2010.
- 6 Months from the date of the release of the BCGBS projects applying for a permit and electing the LEED option will be required to obtain certification from the USGBC.

7. What additional documentation will be required to obtain a building permit under the green building regulations?

For projects electing the LEED Silver option they will be required to provide:

- LEED registration documentation
- Design Credit review submittal packet
- LEED scorecard in PDF format or Read-only access to LEED On-line
- Plan size LEED checklist be signed by a LEED AP and accompanied by an affidavit with thorough narration for each credit including:
 - i. references to pertinent plan sheets where credit compliance is indicated
 - ii. LEED specifications sections
 - iii. parties responsible for each credit

For projects electing BCGBS option they will be required to provide:

- Standards Verification Package:
 - i. Application Cover Sheet
 - ii. Final Applicants Scorecard
 - iii. Applicants Checklist
 - iv. Supporting Documentation
- LEED AP contact information
- Commissioning Agent contact information

8. What additional documentation will be required to obtain an occupancy permit under the green building regulations?

For projects electing the LEED Silver option:

Credits which are intended to be met during the construction phase should be indicated on the checklist at the time of the building permit submittal. At the time of the Occupancy Permit application, the completed checklist indicating which construction credits the project was successful in meeting must be submitted. The checklist will need to be signed by a LEED AP and accompanied by an affidavit to verify that all indicated credits were met. The building official may request additional documentation demonstrating fulfillment of certain credits prior to the issuance of the occupancy permit.

For projects electing BCGBS option:

The City will be verifying and collecting documentation during the permit application, review and inspection phases of the construction project so no additional documentation will be required to obtain the Use and Occupancy Permit.

9. Will any waivers be granted?

The Housing Commissioner may approve full or partial credit waivers to the extent that compliance would be impractical or unduly burdensome and the waiver would serve the public interest. The building official may impose any conditions, restrictions, or limitations on a credit waiver that they consider necessary or appropriate in the circumstances. The building official must submit to the Mayor and the City Council, by March 1st of each year, a list of each waiver approved during the preceding calendar year along with any conditions, restrictions, or limitations that were attached to the waivers.

10. Where can I get more information on the LEED option?

For more information on LEED standards visit, www.usgbc.org

11. Where can I get more information on BCGBS?

For more information visit, www.baltimorehousing.org