



LEED for Homes Certification Process

STEP ONE: Negotiate a Scope of Services with Contacts

In a new approach for [USGBC](#), low-rise single and multi-family residential projects seeking LEED certification are rated by LEED for Homes Providers. These Providers are regional organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in supporting builders wishing to build high performance, sustainable homes.

Documentation and verification fees typically range from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for a single-family custom home. By virtue of replication and volume, multi-family projects and production builders can sustainably reduce the fees per unit. The cost of verification will vary with the size of the home, the LEED performance tier (i.e. Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum), travel time required by the field inspectors, the number of homes being built, and the builder's experience with green home building techniques.

Send a completed [Project Information](#) form to Contacts. Once we have a brief project description, we will prepare a fee proposal and scope of services for LEED for Homes certification. This information helps us identify the Project Team (architect/builder/owner) and understand the energy-efficiency and sustainable attributes you are considering incorporating into the home. Once a signed proposal and initial payment is received, Contacts will assign a LEED Project Manager and arrange for a two-hour meeting with the Project Team.

A fundamental attribute of high performance or “green” homes involves a process called “integrated design”. Integrated design is a process of design and planning in which all project team members are given an opportunity to weigh-in on potential challenges and solutions. By working together, the participants can often achieve multiple high performance benefits at a lower cost that might otherwise be overlooked. We will assist the Project Team to understand program prerequisites and identify optional credits appropriate and/or feasible for the project using the LEED for Homes [Checklist](#) and [Reference Manual](#). The goal is to confirm a positive strategic fit with LEED green rating system, finalize a preliminary LEED rating, and help team members understand roles and responsibilities. The completed preliminary checklist helps establish project goals but can be revised as the project develops.

STEP TWO: Sign a “Builder Agreement”.

USGBC is directing this nationally recognized standard for residential green building toward the builder, but the builder, homeowner, developer or design professional can sign the [Builder Agreement](#) and assume a leadership role in the construction of high performance “green” homes. The completed Builder Agreement along with a \$150.00 check, payable to USGBC, should be sent to Contacts. We will also sign the agreement and forward the package to USGBC.

**STEP THREE: Submit plans and specifications to Contects.**

Construction plans and specifications can be submitted to Contects as early as the design development phase. We will perform a comprehensive “plan review” to ascertain the thermal and energy performance of the proposed design. The resulting value of the [Home Energy Rating \(HERS\)](#) relates to meeting or exceeding the performance guidelines established by [ENERGY STAR for Homes](#) and determines the number of LEED points in the Energy and Atmosphere (EA) section.

STEP FOUR: Build the home to the stated goals

Often green construction practices will require that trades learn new ways of doing things. Job-site behavior modification to reduce or recycle construction waste is a good example. The actual performance of the finished home relates directly to the process that the builder uses to ensure that each material, system or equipment is installed and functioning properly. The LEED for Homes Provider will provide field support services to the builder using qualified green HERS raters.

During construction, the Provider’s inspector/rater will be on site at different phases of construction to verify compliance with the different prerequisites and credits. The Provider and rater will work with the builder to schedule and complete multiple inspections and related performance tests.

STEP FIVE: Document the LEED for Homes process.

Several LEED design or construction credits are verified using an [Accountability Form](#). These forms are completed by the person or organization responsible for the design or implementation of one or more LEED credit. For example, the mechanical contractor may “certify” that the home’s outside air ventilation meets ASHRAE /Std 62.2 and will, if audited, provide the necessary supporting documents (drawings, calculations, etc.).

The LEED Project Manager assigned to your project will collect and maintain the checklists, the accountability forms, results from field tests and inspections made during and after construction, and other project documents. Contects will use this information to determine if the home qualifies for a LEED for Homes rating. Homes that have successfully completed the process will be submitted to USGBC for final certification and recognition.