

Dalhousie Sustainable Building Policy

March 2011

Approved by the President's Advisory Council on Sustainability and the President's Office.

Dalhousie University is committed to pursuing sustainability goals and objectives as articulated in the Dalhousie Sustainability Policy, Statement of Principles, and Plan. This policy formalizes Dalhousie's existing practice and commitment to green building as demonstrated by the design and construction of a number of energy efficient buildings from the 90s to the LEED designed buildings of today.

1.0 Purpose

This policy supports the sustainability direction of the university by:

- Reducing operating costs of building utilities;
- Being a leader in sustainable building practices;
- Reducing environmental impacts such as greenhouse gases; and
- Providing healthy and social spaces for Dalhousie students and employees and community member's.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Sustainable Building

Sustainable building “ is the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction. This practice expands and complements the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort” (USPEA, 2010).

2.2 LEED Rating System

“The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System[®] encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria. LEED is a third-party certification program and an internationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings.

LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health:

- sustainable site development
- water efficiency
- energy efficiency
- materials selection
- indoor environmental quality

Certification is based on the total point score achieved, following an independent review. With four possible levels of certification (certified, silver, gold and platinum), LEED is flexible enough to accommodate a wide range of green building strategies that best fit the constraints and goals of particular projects.” (Canada Green Building Council, 2010).

3.0 Policy

Dalhousie University will plan, construct, manage, and maintain all Dalhousie properties using principles of sustainable building. All new “major building projects” should be designed, constructed and certified to meet at least LEED Gold standards. This policy will affect all new buildings being currently built and opening after 2011 and any new buildings thereafter. A major building project is defined as a construction project larger than 10,000 gross sq ft. Dalhousie will set standards for green building design and operations in all renovation projects of all sizes from retrofits of interior building spaces and houses to major buildings. Green building programs for existing buildings such as LEED for Existing Buildings and Operations and Maintenance will be explored.

Criteria for choosing designers, architects, construction managers, and consultants shall include demonstrated knowledge of green building practices and familiarity with life cycle cost analysis and LEED ratings.

4.0 Procedures and Responsibilities

Facilities Management shall be responsible for annually evaluating and reporting to President’s Advisory Council on Sustainability on how well the University construction and renovation projects are meeting this policy.

5.0 Education

Facilities Management and Office Sustainability staff should incorporate annual green building training for staff. Green building tours, videos, fact sheets and other communications products will be made available to the Dalhousie campus and community at large.