



LEED Zero

March 2025

What is LEED Zero certification and what are its benefits?

LEED provides a framework for healthy, efficient, and cost-saving green buildings.

Building on that work, USGBC developed the LEED Zero certification program, a complement to LEED that verifies the achievement of net zero goals and signals market leadership in green building. LEED Zero represents a new level of achievement in green building that is not just attainable but is the goal of LEED certified projects around the world.

- **LEED Zero Carbon** recognizes buildings operating with net zero carbon emissions over the course of the past year.
- **LEED Zero Energy** recognizes buildings that achieve a source energy use balance of zero for the past year.
- **LEED Zero Water** Certification recognizes buildings that achieve a potable water use balance of zero for the past year.
- **LEED Zero Waste** Certification recognizes buildings that achieve GBCI's TRUE Zero Waste certification at the Platinum level.

How many LEED Zero projects are registered and certified under LEED?

As of March 2025, over 519 projects are registered and certified under various categories of LEED Zero:

- Zero Carbon: 136
- Zero Energy: 166
- Zero Water: 149
- Zero Waste: 68

What technical resources are available for LEED Zero?

Program guide & slide deck

- [LEED Zero program guide](#)
- [LEED Zero slide deck](#)

Articles

- [Companies are making strides in net zero goals through LEED and TRUE certifications](#)
- [LEED On: The future is net zero](#)
- [LEED Zero helps organizations remain committed to net zero goals](#)
- [LEED Zero projects help create a regenerative future](#)

Educational courses

- [Achieving Net Zero: Mastering LEED Zero Carbon Principles](#)

- [An Introduction to LEED Zero: Getting to LEED Zero Energy and LEED Zero Carbon](#)
- [LEED Zero: Lessons Learned from 5 Case Studies + Roadmap for Achieving LEED Zero Certification](#)
- [LEED Zero: Taking LEED Certified Buildings to the Next Level](#)
- [Practical solutions for Net Zero in LEED](#)

Project profiles & case studies

- [Colgate-Palmolive facility in New Jersey achieves LEED Zero Waste](#)
- [LEED Zero Water projects design for the future](#)
- [The first 10 LEED Zero projects](#)
- [Unilever Hefei leverages LEED Zero to make manufacturing sustainable](#)
- [LEED Zero projects directory](#)

Are LEED ID+C or O+M: Interiors projects eligible to pursue LEED Zero certification?

No, interiors projects are not eligible. The LEED Zero program is applicable only for whole buildings previously certified under a LEED BD+C, LEED O+M, or Homes rating systems.

Are LEED Homes projects eligible to pursue LEED Zero certification?

Single family homes certified under LEED for Homes are eligible to pursue LEED Zero Energy and LEED Zero Water certification.

Can projects apply for LEED Zero certification under one or more categories?

Yes, projects can apply for one or more LEED Zero certification categories - Carbon, Energy, Water, and Waste. Homes projects are eligible for LEED Zero Energy and LEED Zero Water only.

Is the project's LEED certification required to be current to pursue LEED Zero certification?

No, as long as the project has been certified under BD+C or O+M, it is eligible. Projects are not required to recertify or maintain certified status to pursue LEED Zero.

Are there any other LEED Zero eligibility requirements that I should be aware of?

To be eligible to pursue LEED Zero, your project must have an average occupancy of 50% or greater over the 12-month reporting period used for the LEED Zero application.

How do I register my project for LEED Zero?

Send an email to leedzero@usgbc.org with the LEED Project ID.

How do I document my project for LEED Zero Energy, Carbon or Water?

Your team will use [Arc](#) to document your LEED Zero project. Please refer to the [LEED Zero Program Guide](#) for the documentation requirements of each LEED Zero category.

1. Activate the project by logging into [Arc](#) using your USGBC login credentials and search for the LEED Project ID. To activate the project, click the sign agreement button and sign the Arc services agreement. If you are unable to access your project, please see [Arc and access](#).

2. Create meters and enter project data for the reporting period. You may find it helpful to review some [short instructional videos](#) for Arc before doing so.
3. Upload supporting documentation in the "Documents" section for the associated meter, which is accessed by clicking on Meters & Surveys, and then the meter name. The "Documents" link is shown in the main part of the screen under the meter name.

What documentation is required?

Please see the documentation requirements for each LEED Zero category on page 16 of the [LEED Zero Program Guide](#).

How do I submit my LEED Zero Energy, Carbon, or Water project for review?

After all documentation is entered in [Arc](#) and ready for review, please complete the steps below to submit your project.

1. Login to the project in [LEED Online](#) and opt-in to LEED Zero by clicking on the LEED Zero tab. Select the LEED Zero categories being pursued, then sign the certification agreement.
 - *If your project does not have a LEED Zero Tab in LEED Online, please send an email to leedzero@usgbc.org with the LEED Project ID and we will provide instructions*
2. Click the yellow "Certification Payment" button on the upper right and submit payment of the LEED Zero Certification fee. You will receive a receipt via email.
3. Complete the [LEED Zero: Registration and Submission form](#) indicating that your project is ready for review. You'll need to attach the receipt that you received to submit the form. Once the form is received, your LEED Zero project is officially under review.

How do I submit my LEED Zero Waste project for review?

After [registering your project](#), please complete the steps below to submit your project.

1. Login to the project in [LEED Online](#) and opt-in to LEED Zero by clicking on the LEED Zero tab. Select LEED Zero Waste, then sign the certification agreement.
 - *If your project does not have a LEED Zero Tab in LEED Online, please send an email to leedzero@usgbc.org with the LEED Project ID and we will provide instructions.*
2. Click the yellow "Certification Payment" button on the LEED Zero tab.
3. Complete the checkout page and submit payment of the LEED Zero Certification fee. You will receive a receipt via email.
4. Complete the [LEED Zero: Registration and Submission form](#) indicating that your project is ready for review. You'll need to attach the payment receipt and the project's TRUE Platinum certificate to submit the form. Once the form is submitted, your LEED Zero project is officially under review.

How much does LEED Zero certification cost?

There is no registration fee for LEED Zero. Certification fees are listed in the [LEED Zero certification fees table](#).

The certification review fee is for one LEED Zero application. Projects may pursue multiple LEED Zero certifications within one application as long as they use the same one-year reporting period and submit all the documentation at one time.

When must I submit my LEED Zero project for review?

Projects should be submitted for review within 60 days of the end of the 12-month reporting period.

How long does the LEED Zero certification review take?

Like LEED, there are two rounds of review. Each round takes about 15-20 business days, and you will have an opportunity to respond to questions and submit clarifications in between reviews.

How long is LEED Zero certification valid?

LEED Zero is valid for three years from the date of certification acceptance.

How do I recertify my LEED Zero Carbon, Energy or Water project?

The recertification process for LEED Zero Carbon, Energy, and Water is identical to the initial certification process:

1. The project team will first need to register for recertification using the [LEED Zero: Registration and Review form](#).
2. Enter performance data from the most recent year of operations in the Arc platform and upload supporting documentation such as utility bills, offsite renewable energy contracts, and source energy/carbon/water balance calculation. Please refer to the [LEED Zero Program Guide](#) for information about the required documentation.
3. Once all data and documentation are entered into Arc, please follow the instructions provided in [LEED Zero project submission and review](#). The project must be submitted for review within 60 days of the end of the one-year recertification reporting period.