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2012 Outlook on Green Building

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As 2011 is quickly coming to an end, it's time to reflect on the successes in green building in the past year and think towards the future of the industry. The 2012 forecast predicts that sustainable building will continue to occur in full force in the new year.

It is predicted that international green building will grow exponentially in 2012 as LEED standards continue to gain awareness and recognition around the world. Major corporations also influence the spread of sustainable building by opening facilities in foreign countries thus imposing their green building practices in new locations. Within the U.S., there will be new LEED mandates to be implemented. These mandates are in response to the evolving industry and will allow the LEED standard to cover a wider range of market segments in addition to having more specific technical requirements.

Renovations of existing buildings are predicted to be the future of the industry with the goal being to keep buildings running efficiently and in working condition for longer. This is the most cost effective and sustainable way of improving energy efficiency and sustainability. Energy Star benchmarking, building audits and building envelope commissioning will continue to grow. Energy management systems are another great way to control energy and they can affect 60% of the world's energy use. It is predicted that 2012 will see continued increases in the availability of funding and incentives for green building and LEED certified projects. Multiple Building Certification is also expected to rise within the next year as the USGBC and LEED standards continue to focus on smaller scale commercial facilities. A trend that is currently developing is the disclosure of building materials. People seem to have a growing desire to know that certified products including wood, cleaning, products, drywall and insulation are being used to construct the building they occupy. The International Living Future Institute has also established a program called Declare which allows manufactures to share information about their product's environmental impact and level of sustainability.

Companies will continue to be a huge influence on sustainability by training their employees and establishing a green mindset within the company culture. In recent months there has been a large push towards green IT, specifically with the opening of more energy efficient and sustainable data centers. This trend is expected to continue along with consumer interest in energy efficient ratings on the equipment they buy. As a testament to the longevity and legitimacy of this sustainability movement, city planning now incorporates the development of greener urban districts and widespread energy efficiency initiatives.

The past year has seen monumental progress in green building and sustainability which gives promise that 2012 will bring many more improvements. To read more about the Top 10 Green Building Trends for 2012, visit Green Building Services' website.

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