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Meet LEED building certification status with energy conservation window films

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According to the U.S. Department of Energy, buildings use 39% of the energy and 74% of the electricity produced each year in the U.S. Demands to save energy and lower utilities expenses are coming from many directions. Building owners and property managers demand products that will help reduce ever-increasing energy costs. Tenants, residents and consumers demand energy conservation and sustainability practices related to the space they lease or purchase. State and federal agencies are requesting and requiring energy conservation measures to reduce overall energy consumption.

Architects and engineers are most likely very familiar with USGBC (U.S. Green Building Council), the non-profit organization that created the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building certification program. Hopefully, you have taken steps to register your construction or renovation project and are on your way to obtaining or improving your LEED building certification status. You can learn more at www.usgbc.org and can get started with your project registration through their link to "LEEDonline."

Currently, four levels of building certification exist - determined by the number of points a project earns. Typically, levels and point ranges are: Certified (40-49 Points), Silver (50-59 Points), Gold (60-79 Points) and Platinum (80+ Points).

Projects, not products, earn points. Many quality window film products meet LEED Energy and Atmosphere Prerequisites and qualify for LEED credits that could help move your project to the next level. Your authorized window film dealer can provide LEED information on specific films. Don't underestimate the energy savings benefit of window film. EPA's Energy Star Manual has cited "window film as your best opportunity to save on cooling and heating loads."

Insulating window films conserve energy by reducing heat gain and loss through windows. They can reduce AC costs by blocking up to 79% of the sun's heat in warmer months and reducing heat loss by up to 30% in colder months. Additionally, they offer daylighting advantages, help manage nuisance glare and improve safety and security. A low profile measure of security, safety window films hold glass in place upon, reducing risk of injury or damage in the event of blasts, violent weather or vandalism.

Dealer representatives should provide you with specific film specifications and reliable, independent test reports - as well as performance results including UV Light Rejected, Visible Light Transmitted and Rejected, Solar Heat Reduction, Glare Reduction, Shading Coefficients, Emissivity and U Values. A knowledgeable representative will help guide you toward the appropriate film for your project.

Keeping up with demands to save energy as well as the changes and improvements in product technologies can be a daunting task. I suggest you rely upon a window film manufacturer that has

proof of performance supported by longevity in the field and one that invests heavily in research and development. A manufacturer that supports their authorized dealers with the education, training and resources to stand behind their products will provide you with confidence in your purchasing decisions. Ultimately, a quality window film retrofit is an affordable option over glass replacement and can generate a rapid return on investment - often within two to three years.

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