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## **North Branch Construction has been building "green" long before it became common**

July 23, 2008 - Green Buildings

What do the Gold Level LEED Certified Dartmouth College McLane and Fahey Hall dormitories, Silver Level LEED Certified City of Portsmouth Public Library and environmentally friendly new Plant Office Building for Stonyfield Farm have in common? - They are all built "green" by North Branch Construction, Inc.

North Branch Construction was building "green" long before it became a common word in the construction industry vocabulary. In the mid 1990s, North Branch built their first Energy Crafted Home featuring a geothermal heat pump system with a 3 million gallon man-made pond and an 84 KW wind generator. Over the years, many of North Branch clients have received rebates totaling several thousand dollars under the EPA - Energy Star program, earning North Branch the Energy Star for Homes Outstanding Achievement Award in 2007.

North Branch was the construction manager for the award winning Dartmouth College McLane and Fahey Hall in Hanover, which recently achieved Gold Level LEED Certification from the U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Some of the items which contributed to the certification include installation of two standing column wells (approximately 1,500 feet deep) to provide the geothermal source for the heating and cooling system, the use of "green" products in the construction, and recycling approximately 90% of the construction waste. This project was recognized by the Associated Builders and Contractors "Excellence in Construction" program with an Award of Merit in 2007.

North Branch was also the construction manager for the award winning Silver Level LEED Certified City of Portsmouth Public Library project. This was the first municipal project to be LEED Certified in the State of New Hampshire. This project, constructed in a residential neighborhood, was designed to reduce noise to the neighborhood, be black sky compliant, and to take advantage of the daylight with an open concept floor plan. The construction included using certified wood (from managed forests) in the windows and trims and millwork. The energy efficiency was enhanced by North Branch Construction's value engineering which replaced the traditional air handler HVAC system with VAVs to a design/build more efficient heat pump system. This saved the city approximately \$700,000 from the original design and 32% in projected (by model) on-going annual energy cost savings. The project also included recycling most of the material left as a result of demolishing an armory, which was on the site, as well as harvesting the slate from that building to be used in the new library. In addition, over 75% of the construction waste was recycled. North Branch was honored with the ABC "Excellence in Construction" Award in the Institutional \$5 to \$10 million category for this project in 2007.

At the present time, North Branch is constructing a new Plant Office Building for Stonyfield Farm in Londonderry. This new two-story, steel framed, 33,000 s/f building is being built for sustainability.

The environmentally friendly facility will feature daylight harvesting, sunshades, solar hot water panels, energy efficient lighting and lighting controls. The project will be completed in the summer of 2008.

North Branch Construction puts its money where its mouth is and recently moved into their new corporate headquarters in Concord, as the first LEED registered general contractor corporate headquarters building in the state. North Branch purchased an existing building located at 76 Old Turnpike Rd. and began additions and renovations in the late summer of 2007. The design of the new headquarters encompasses a wide range of sustainable and energy efficient design and construction concepts and methods. The construction site was chosen and engineered carefully to reduce the environmental impact of the project during and after the construction. Some of the many sustainability objectives of the project are: reduction of water usage, reduction of waste through recycling, conservation of resources by using materials with high recycled content, usage of regionally manufactured materials. The design of the new building utilized the existing structure in order to reduce demolition waste and reduce a need for new resources. At the same time, the new building envelope was designed to maximize energy conservation through the use of high-efficiency insulation and fenestration.

North Branch Construction has been honored with numerous awards for Excellence in Construction from Associated Builders and Contractors, historic preservation from Manchester Historic Association, and Merit Awards from Plan NH. North Branch Construction's management team includes LEED Accredited Professionals on staff.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540