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## **EQ's Willis Tower becomes largest building to earn LEED Platinum**

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Chicago, IL According to EQ Office (EQ), a U.S. office portfolio company wholly owned by Blackstone's real estate funds, Willis Tower is now the largest building in the United States to earn the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design's (LEED) Platinum designation. The Tower earned the Platinum designation under LEED's latest v4.1 rating system, the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) strongest and boldest rating system to date. Willis Tower earned LEED Gold in 2018, and in less than a year, made significant energy, sustainability and comfort improvements to achieve the Platinum status.

In partnership with Rivion, a Wisconsin-based energy consulting firm, EQ improved the building's environmental quality through a number of building enhancements, including:

- Revamping the heating and cooling (HVAC) system through the installation of state-of-the-art technologies, allowing the tower to heat and cool more efficiently, which is expected to reduce energy consumption by up to 20%.
- Reducing heating water energy consumption by replacing electric hot-water generators with natural gas hot-water boilers.
- Upgrading the building's lighting control system and installing energy-efficient LED lights.
- Installing low-flow high-efficiency sink faucets, toilets and urinals, which is expected to cut approximately 30% of the building's water consumption (11 million gallons annually).

Willis Tower is currently undergoing a more than \$500 million renovation, the biggest restorative transformation in the building's 46-year history. The driving force behind the tower's transformation is Blackstone and EQ's mission to create sustainable experiences and make smart choices that improve the space and environment around its properties. These values are noticeable in the tower's new 125,000 s/f of tenant-exclusive amenities, as well as the addition of Catalog, the 300,000 s/f retail, dining and entertainment experience at the base of Willis Tower and the soon-to-open 30,000 s/f outdoor deck and garden.

In addition to Willis Tower, EQ manages tens of millions of square feet of LEED and Energy Star Certified office properties across the country, including The Exchange Building (Seattle), which is LEED Platinum; 350 N. Orleans St. (Chicago) and 1740 Broadway (New York City), which are LEED

Gold; and Griffin Towers (Santa Ana, CA), which is Energy Star Certified.

Additionally, in the past year, EQ has established formal committees supporting key environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) initiatives and has implemented advanced technology across its portfolio to measure each building's performance.

"Willis Tower is in the middle of an exciting evolution, transitioning from an office building into a neighborhood that delivers the best experiences of life and work in Chicago," said David Moore, senior vice president and portfolio director, EQ Office. "Our tenants and their employees are passionate about working in offices where sustainability is a priority, and we're proud that our commitment to sustainability, which extends throughout our portfolio, has earned Willis Tower the prestigious LEED Platinum certification."

Giovanni Cutaia, Blackstone Real Estate's global head of asset management, said, "We are committed to driving greater sustainability by making the assets in our portfolio more energy efficient. The capital we are investing in Willis Tower will not only make it a better place to work and visit, but also better for the planet."

"Transforming our buildings and communities to be more sustainable happens one project at a time, and Willis Tower has been a leader in showing how green design, construction and operations are not only good for the environment, but for tenants as well," said Mahesh Ramanujam, president and CEO, USGBC. "LEED was created to make the world a better place and revolutionize our buildings and communities by providing everyone access to healthy and green buildings. Willis Tower's LEED Platinum certification is a prime example of how high-performing, sustainable spaces can create local solutions that contribute to making a global difference."

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