



“Green” Buildings and Energy Star Requirements



SUHRCO manages a diverse portfolio of commercial and multifamily residential properties in the Puget Sound region. Established in 1973, the company employs more than 300 experienced professionals dedicated to meeting the management, leasing and brokerage needs of building owners, tenants, and condominium/homeowner association boards and owners.

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The push for more “green” building and design and energy efficiency has grown tremendously over the years from a grassroots movement among architects and builders to the halls of government. The State of Washington and the City of Seattle soon will require building owners to disclose just how “green” their buildings are in terms of energy efficiency.

Beginning in 2011, the State of Washington will require owners of non-residential buildings to rate and disclose their buildings’ energy efficiency using [ENERGY STAR](#) software. The City of Seattle further mandated that multi-family buildings over a specific size rate and disclose their energy efficiency as well.

Background on “Green Building”

What are known as LEED standards today started in the mid-1990s with partnerships among the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the Natural Resources Defense Fund. Today LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) has grown to encompass more than 14,000 projects in the United States and 30 countries covering 1.062 billion square feet of development area, according to USGBC.

Many architects, engineers and building managers have voluntarily adopted “green” design and management into their operations. In addition to the environmental benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, some studies show additional economic benefits with increased energy efficiency and “green” operations. A City of Seattle economic analysis of the proposed commercial and multifamily rating and disclosure programs shows that it will collectively impact more than 8,000 buildings. The analysis found that the programs would save more than 47 million kilowatt hours annually and create as many as 150 jobs.

Specific Standards

According to the State of Washington mandate, nonresidential buildings greater than 50,000 SF are required to rate and disclose their ENERGY STAR portfolio rating beginning January 1, 2011, while buildings greater than 10,000 SF are required to rate and disclose beginning January 1, 2012.

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We are currently working with several property owners to help them become familiar and comfortable with the ENERGY STAR rating system and reporting requirements before they go into effect. The EPA also has a great deal of free information about Portfolio Manager and a useful [starter kit](#) on its website.

For more information about how to use the ENERGY STAR system and the implications of these new disclosure requirements, please contact Rick Shorett at 425-455-1950 or ricks@suhrco.com.