

# WHAT IS LEED?

---

## Introduction | What is LEED?

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Available for virtually all building, community and home project types, LEED provides a framework to create healthy, highly efficient and cost-saving green buildings. LEED certification is a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement, and includes four LEED rating levels: Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum. - U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)

The USGBC was established in 1993 with a mission to promote sustainability-focused practices in the building industry. Representatives from approximately 60 firms, as well as nonprofits, gathered in April 1993 for the founding meeting.

Ideas were then shared for an open and balanced coalition spanning the entire building industry and for a green building rating system, which would later become LEED.

## LEED Projects and Tile: The Top Five Most Common Questions

**Question #1: Can my project earn LEED V4 credits from specifying ceramic and porcelain tile from Creative Materials? If so, which products should I specify?**

Answer: **YES!** At Creative Materials, we have identified products within our catalog which are considered "LEED-friendly" because they have Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), Health Product Declarations® (HPDs) and contain recycled content. Each of these components can contribute to credit points in accordance with the LEED V4 rating system. Find these products at <https://www.creativematerialscorp.com/leed-friendly-products>.

However, keep in mind that all tile is made of naturally occurring materials and is an inherently healthy choice for green building practices, regardless of if a collection has an EPD and HPD.

**Question #2: How do I know which tile products will help earn points towards LEED V4?**

Answer: Products that offer HPDs, EPDs, Declare Labels, Recycled Content, and are Low-emitting materials will help you earn points.

**Question #3: Can ceramic and porcelain tile be LEED Certified?**

Answer: **NO.** Individual building products cannot be LEED certified per the USGBC. LEED certification applies only to buildings and neighborhoods. Although the USGBC does not certify, promote, or endorse products and services of individual companies, products and services do play a role and can help projects with credit achievement. Look through the USGBC [credit library](#) to see which prerequisites or credits your product might support.

**Question #4: What LEED rating system categories should I look at for earning credit for tile?**

Answer: Material & Resources and Indoor Environmental Quality

**Question #5: V4.1 – What's the deal?**

Answer: V4.1 is currently the newest version of LEED. It includes updated referenced standards and allows projects to earn LEED points through building performance monitoring. For example, updates for the BD+C rating system include a new Renewable Energy credit that better addresses diverse methods of renewables procurement and evolving global renewables markets, as well as restructured Materials & Resources credits.

## Conclusion | Why get LEED Certification for my Building?

There are several benefits to attaining LEED Certification, including, but not limited to:

- Recognition for your building
- Faster lease-up rates
- Higher resale value
- Healthier indoor space for building occupants
- Lower use of water, energy and other resources
- Healthier for the community and the environment
- Enhances your brand and establishes you as a leader in green building

## Tile is a great product choice to support green building practices because...

Tile is made of naturally occurring materials and is a healthy choice for indoor air quality because it has no volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions. Tile also offers an extremely long lifecycle and is one of the most durable flooring products on the market. Most tile factories are "closed loop" which means they reuse water and materials, sending minimal waste to landfills and wastewater to treatment facilities. Tile is inhospitable to dust mites, mold, germs, and bacteria, and is easily cleaned with just warm water, meaning harmful chemicals are not needed.

For more information on tile and sustainability, visit <https://www.creativematerialscorp.com/resources/sustainability/>.