

## NFSA Green Committee and LEED®

*The NFSA moves forward to bring Green tools to its members!*

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As more NFSA members are bidding in Green Construction projects, The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry is continuing to research and investigate what the fire sprinkler contractor's role and responsibilities are and we will continue to provide info to the membership. You asked for assistance and awareness and we are gathering the info.

To accomplish this, as you are probably aware the NFSA Board gave a green light to assemble a Green Committee. The NFSA Green Committee's second meeting, which was held in conjunction with this past November's NFSA Board of Directors meeting in NYC, was well attended by committee members and guests. The major agenda point for the meeting was a presentation by Mr. Glen Phillips of Green Building Service\* (GBS) with an update on LEED® 2009. More important were the ideas and direction suggested by GBS to develop an "Automatic Fire Sprinkler in LEED Toolkit" for NFSA members. The excellent discussion resulting from this presentation GBS and the individual research by all in attendance is leading up to what should be the ultimate toolkit for the NFSA membership.

Some of the contents in the toolkit discussed included a quick reference of the LEED Sections and Credits in which fire sprinklers may be a benefit, when fire sprinklers are specifically exempt, chapters that cover other types of fire protection, and where fire sprinkler contractors, operating in the nature as a "contractor" will be affected while operating on a green construction site. Many of these subjects have already been pointed out in previous SQ articles.

A concentration will be to work on the LEED program's "Innovation in Design" chapter and the one credit available there. The material in the toolkit for this LEED Credit may be paramount for our near future pursuit for having fire sprinklers more widely accepted by the USGBC. The "Innovation in Design" Credit for fire sprinklers is available now, but under specific green beneficial conditions which must be reviewed by the USGBC. This has been overviewed in previous articles and it is anticipated that the toolkit will have templates and examples needed for the fire sprinkler contractor to work with a project's LEED Accredited Professional and take a look at fire sprinklers in buildings where it may not be required by code or statute.

Another topic raised by the committee is the NFSA working with the US Green Building Council on more recognition of fire sprinklers in future LEED editions. One possibility is placing representation on the LEED Water Efficiency Technical Advisory Group (TAG). What is needed here is simply patience for a seat to open on the TAG as well as having the right candidate to represent the NFSA identified ahead of time.

Training and assistance to members to help them understand all these bullet points that are being identified will be required. Expect development of more technical programs for on-line and in-class or possibly something for self study at one's convenience to make sure the NFSA fire sprinkler contractor fully understands the LEED process, LEED requirements, and has the edge over the competition. One program for guidance and tips for the fire sprinkler contractor to convince a LEED AP® to use fire sprinklers to obtain the "Innovation in Design" Credit may be a program unto itself. Stay tuned!

The "depository" for all this information is in the discussion stages and will likely be a Green webpage the committee has proposed to be added to the NFSA web site. It is anticipated that all Green Construction material will be quickly referenced, stored and obtained by NFSA members. As we are focusing on LEED documents presently, we will also place any pertinent material found in other green documents including two green codes, the National Green Building Standard (ICC-700) and ICC's upcoming 2012 Intl Green Construction Code (for commercial properties) in draft now.

I'd like to thank everyone for their continued input and the several committee members volunteering their time to make this possible.

If YOU have operated on a Green project and have insight, suggestions, or a horror store, please contact me and if something that can help NFSA members in the future, we can include in a future edition of SQ.

*\*- GBS, headquartered in Portland, OR has offices around the U.S. With 61 staff members including 14 licensed professionals, GBS's bid was contracted by the NFSA to provide services to reach our goal. GBS has experience in over 150 LEED certified buildings.*

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