

## The Green Energy Newsletter,

Written by Architects and Engineers - for Architects, Builders, Developers &amp; Real Estate Professionals.

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To add some laughter in this recession, this issue looks at **GREEN WASHING** and **LAUGHABLE LEED PROJECTS** which pokes fun at the political correctness and myopic mentality which spends a bunch of money and wastes resources only to build some extravagance and then get it Green Certified to pretend that it is eco-friendly. **NEXT ISSUE** - Detailed discussion of the all Energy Efficiency items in President Obama's [Economic Recovery Bill](#)....Cheers, Alan Hugenot

**GREEN WASHING - Taking Liberties with LEED**

The following was excerpted verbatim from an article by [Leora Brody Vogel](#), which appeared in the *New York Times*, *Energy & Environment* February 19, 2009

[chicago.craigslist](#) > [city of chicago](#) > [real estate - by broker](#)

**Avoid scams and fraud by dealing locally!** Beware any arrangement involving Western Union, Moneygram, wire transfer, or a landlord/owner who is out of the country or cannot meet you in person.  
[Metr.info](#)

**\$279000 1BD & 2BD Condos in Eco-Friendly, LEED Certified Building! (River North) (map)**

Reply to: see below

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A posting in the housing section of the Chicago Craigslist trumpets the availability of one- and two-bedroom condos in an "Eco-Friendly, LEED Certified Building." The promotional Web site at <http://www.lwestone.com/building/design.html>, for the building lists "LEED-Certified" as one of the "eco-features."

The problem is the 14-story high-rise, called the 9 West Erie, has not yet been built, and therefore cannot be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, program — the nationally recognized third-party certification process for the construction of "green" buildings.

Unfortunately, **A building must be fully constructed before it can achieve the LEED designation.**

While the Craigslist posting and the Web site for 9 West Erie provide clearer language in the fine print (the building is "pursuing" LEED certification, they say, under their headlines), the example illustrates how the LEED moniker can be misrepresented in real estate marketing materials.

A recent [article posted by the realty information service CoStar Group](#) investigates the increase in dubious LEED claims and cites several examples of projects being promoted as LEED-certified while still in the early stages of development or construction.

"Misleading statements about LEED, which appear in marketing materials, press statements and even securities filings, are a form of greenwashing," the article states. "And according to property professionals who have encountered it, the problem is becoming worse as the green movement has grown in popularity."

For those who want to check if a building is as green as advertised, the Green Building Council maintains an online LEED registry at <http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/Project/CertifiedProjectList.aspx>.

## LAUGHABLE LEED?

The article online at <http://greenbuildingelements.com/2009/02/16/the-10-dumbest-green-buildings-on-earth/> lists some very amusing and confusing LEED Certified Projects. All of which might be called PRETENDING TO BE GREEN:

1. Yes, there is an LEED-certified gas station. No it does not sell bio diesel, but regular gas.
2. Justin Timberlake's golf course has a LEED-certified lodge, but what about the chemicals used to keep the greens green?
3. LEED certified Water Bottling Plants.....Nestle's Pure Life, Ozarka, Arrowhead, Ice Mountain, and Deer Park water bottling plants all have LEED certifications, but when you think about the plastic bottle garbage they generate you wonder if their LEED certifications are actually eco-friendly
4. Logan Airport Terminal A - Boston, Mass. While the building may be eco-friendly, jet airplanes head the list as the least eco friendly of all things manmade.
5. Toyota Car Dealership - Rockwall, Tex. Toyota's entire fleet of SUV's has worse gas mileage than Chevrolet, so what is so eco-friendly about a LEED certified dealership selling their cars?
6. Antilia Tower - Mumbai, India, often cited as one of the greenest buildings on the planet, and probably not LEED certified because it is no in the U.S., it is however the home of only one family, and built in one of the most overcrowded cities on the planet.
7. Civic Parking Garage Santa Monica, LEED certified to encourage using your car instead of public transit?
8. Vacation Home Development - Las Vegas, Nev. Wow, A LEED certified Vacation Home. If we are going to be sustainable, do you really need more than one home?
9. Spaceport America - New Mexico, LEED certified building, O.K. So how is personal space travel in the \$250,000 range for a ticket, sustaining the environment, when it uses up such a huge amount of resources for one space flight. This is truly the rich pretending to be eco-friendly.

If you have questions on any aspect of Green Energy, Sustainability, LEED, Green Point Ratings or Title 24, simply give Alan or Mark a call at (415 391-0186) to discuss your Title 24 documentation needs or any Green Energy Subject. **We provide the best Title 24 service in California**, through the synergism of an Architect and an Energy Engineer working together to enhance your project.