



Calvert County Environmental Commission

GREEN BUILDINGS

1. *What is a “green” building and why should we build green?*

Green building structures use materials and processes that are environmentally responsible, sustainable, and energy efficient throughout a structure’s life cycle—from siting to design, construction, operation, renovation, and deconstruction. Green buildings are designed to reduce their overall impact on human health and the natural environment by using recycled materials in construction, create healthy indoor environmental with minimal pollutants, and feature landscaping designs that reduce water usage. There are also economic and social benefits of green building practices.

There is a collegiate competition sponsored by the Department of Energy for designing and building examples of green and energy-efficient housing. After judging is completed, all entries are open to the public.

For more information, check these links:

[Basic Information | Green Building | US EPA](#)

[Why Build Green? | Green Building | US EPA](#)

[Solar Decathlon: About the Build Challenge](#)

2. *How are buildings certified as “green” in the United States?*

The U.S. Department of Energy’s ENERGY STAR program addresses one of the most important aspects of green buildings: energy conservation. This federal government program qualifies new and renovated buildings as energy efficient by awarding the ENERGY STAR label. In addition, the U.S. Green Building Council has a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification process with four levels, from lowest to highest: certified, silver, gold, and platinum.

For more information, check these links:

[LEED Building Information | GSA](#)

[USGBC | U.S. Green Building Council](#)

3. *Are there any LEED-certified “green” buildings in Calvert County?*

Yes, at least two.

The new R.V. Truitt Laboratory at the University of Maryland’s Chesapeake Biological Laboratory in Solomons is a green building with a LEED Silver Certification. The building includes several

energy-efficient features and cooling-system designs that will achieve a 28% energy cost savings. The Truitt Lab received the 2017 U.S. Green Building Council's "Maryland Community Leader for Higher Education Award" in recognition of CBL's overall commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency.

The new Northern High School recently completed at a cost of \$77 million received a LEED Silver Certification. The facility has bio-retention systems for capturing storm water, a rain water harvesting system for irrigation purposes, an energy efficient geothermal HVAC system, and a reflective roof.

For more information, check these links:

[Northern High School Awarded Prestigious LEED Green Building Certification - The Southern Maryland Chronicle](#)

[R V Truitt Building | U.S. Green Building Council \(usgbc.org\)](#)

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