

## Maintaining LEED Certification

### **How to Keep Your Green Building Green**

Now that you have crossed the “finish line” and obtained your LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, the race is not over. You must maintain your LEED certification by meeting specified operational milestones over time. For example, your newly installed heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system must be maintained and your janitorial staff must follow through on using green cleaning products. Building owners and operators need tools for operating their green building and sustaining their building practices. One such tool is the [Environmental Management System](#) (EMS).

### **Relationship between LEED and EMS**

An EMS is a sustainability tool designed to shrink the environmental footprint of an organization. An EMS can transform environmental management from a "cost center" into a strategic advantage by decreasing operating costs (*i.e.*, energy, raw materials, and waste costs) and improving environmental compliance. An EMS is a systematic process that is used around the world to help facilities work toward environmental sustainability and continual improvement.

LEED and EMS are independent management systems designed to complement and support one another. The EMS is an ideal tool for evaluating the environmental impact of a building's existing and ongoing operations. Organizations can effectively implement the EMS as part of a building project to capture the benefits and knowledge from the green building process.

Among other things, an EMS provides a framework for clearly defining roles and responsibilities to ensure the building achieves and maintains its intended certification. An EMS allows LEED building owners and operators to better manage and control green building documents and records including policies, codes, and ever-changing standards. Implementing an EMS can also educate and inform employees, the public, and stakeholders about the facility's green building efforts.

An EMS is an invaluable tool that can help building owners and operators bridge the gap between the LEED certification phase and developing a process that integrates existing and ongoing environmental aspects and impacts into facility management.

### **For More Information**

If you are interested in receiving more information about how an Environmental Management System can help improve the environmental performance of your LEED certified building, please contact Gary Lucks at 510.268.9210 or [gary@beyondcompliance.net](mailto:gary@beyondcompliance.net).