



What does it mean to be green?

The most widely used rating system for green building is LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design). The LEED® Green Building Rating System™ was established by the nation's leading coalition on sustainable building, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), in 1998.

The system defines standards for environmentally responsible, healthier, and more profitable structures. Points are awarded to new construction and major renovation in five categories:

- Sustainable Sites
- Water Efficiency
- Energy & Atmosphere
- Materials & Resources
- Indoor Environmental Quality

Right now, only natural stone that is local to the project can contribute LEED® points under the Regional Material credits. But, more can be done to promote natural stone as a sustainable building material.

Rock-solid statistics needed

Natural stone currently offers many attractive, environmentally-friendly attributes, including:

- An enduring life-cycle
- Durability
- Ease of care and maintenance
- Recyclability
- Quarry and manufacturing best practices

The Natural Stone Council is committed to partnering with researchers and various industry experts to test the environmental impacts and benefits of building with natural stone.

Several areas of exploration exist:

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)—Life cycle assessment examines the environmental costs and benefits of a product from its original extraction to its final disposal. The USGBC intends to integrate aspects of LCA into future LEED® programs.

Life Cycle Cost (LCC)—Life-cycle costing assesses initial costs (design/construction), operating costs (energy, water, sewage, waste, recycling and other utilities), maintenance, repair and replacement costs, and any other environmental or social costs.

Water Use Reduction—An important principle in sustainable building is to limit or reduce the use of potable water.

Construction Waste Management—Sustainable building helps divert construction, demolition and land-clearing debris from disposal in landfills and incinerators.

Material Reuse—Material reuse diverts salvaged material from the landfills and reduces demand and costs for virgin materials.

The stone-cold truth

The Natural Stone Council aims to further position natural stone as the preferred material in sustainable building by:

- Using the five key categories of the LEED® rating system as a guide to research, test, and substantiate that stone is a natural choice in building green
- Establishing an Advisory Council made up of architects, designers, specification writers and others with an intimate knowledge of natural stone and its uses in building and landscaping
- Promoting the use of natural stone through media outreach





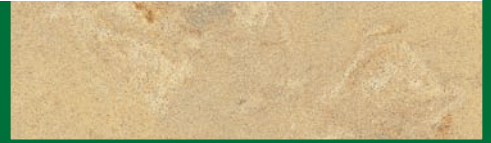
Build to last. Build green.

Green, sustainable building is the most significant and exciting development in the construction industry over the past decade.

While one needs to look no further than the ancient pyramids or the Parthenon to know that natural stone is a sustainable building material, staying power is simply not enough. Natural stone's impact on the environment and how it supports environmentally-friendly building methods and principles are yet to be defined.

At this time, recommendations are being made about what products and designs support green building initiatives without supporting data. Until now, the natural stone industry has not been represented in these discussions. We must be instrumental in the definition and further implementation of green building practices.

Today, sustainable building means so much more than simply standing the test of time. Sustainable building is about our earth, our air, our environment.



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Get involved...

To learn more about how you can help position natural stone as a material of choice, contact a member of the NSC Committee on Sustainability:

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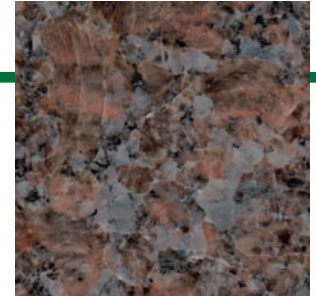
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NSC gives rock solid support for green building

