

# The Merchandise Mart Earns LEED-EB: OM Gold Certification

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World's largest LEED certified building moves up to Gold certification category

CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Since 1930, when The Merchandise Mart opened as the largest building in the world, it has paved the way in important areas like environmental sustainability. Earlier today, Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc. (MMPI), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Vornado Realty Trust (VNO), announced that The Mart has added another chapter to its illustrious history as it was awarded LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance Version 2009 (LEED-EB: OM) Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program. The Merchandise Mart's recertification is in line with Vornado's strong commitment to sustainability.

MMPI has developed, implemented and enhanced a comprehensive sustainability program that reduces overall water consumption, optimizes energy efficiency, supports ozone-protection protocols, encourages renewable and alternative energy sources, purchases materials with less environmental impact, and eliminates sources of indoor air pollution.

In November 2007, the 4.2 million-square-foot property was awarded LEED for Existing Buildings: Version 2.0 (LEED-EB) Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program, making it the largest LEED-EB certified building the world at the time. The Merchandise Mart spans two city blocks in Chicago, rises 25 stories, and welcomes more than three million visitors each year.

MMPI is certainly no novice to the idea or practice of sustainability. As host to office, retail, and wholesale-showroom tenants, as well as producer of tradeshow and consumer events, the firm's commitment to sustainability spans several decades, as evidenced by its building operations/remodeling projects and its pioneering of some of the industry's longest-running green-design programs, educational seminars, and presentations, including the NeoCon® World's Trade Fair, the largest conference and exhibition for interior design and facilities management in North America.

As the epicenter for high design and luxury goods, The Merchandise Mart has long supported green initiatives, including the construction of a thermal storage system in 1986 which reduces the building's peak energy use and remains cutting edge today.

MMPI has fostered an eco-friendly culture within the building and works carefully with vendors, construction partners, office tenants and showroom partners to ensure that they are using eco-friendly products and embracing best practices to reduce waste and educate visitors. MMPI invests significant time in educating tenants about the green practices in effect, as well as offering further training and support for tenants in pursuit of LEED for Commercial Interiors (LEED-CI) certification in their showrooms.

The Mart also works very closely with dozens of tenants who have achieved or are seeking LEED certification. These innovative partners include Haworth, IIDA, Milliken, Mohawk, OFS, Knoll, Allsteel, Invista, Steelcase, Coalesse, HON, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, PCDW, Stylex, CF Group, Sub-Zero Wolf, and Patcraft.

There are six key areas within the LEED-EB Operations and Maintenance certification review, including sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovations in operations, along with regional priority credits.

Within each category, MMPI teamed up with showroom tenants, the City of Chicago, and other sustainability partners, including the Delta Institute, CLEAResult, Smithereen, Sieben Energy, Admiral Mechanical, Schneider Electric, D. Rausch, ABM, Republic Services, Presto-X, Fluorecycle, Brickman Group, and Collective Resource, Inc., to create effective strategies to improve efficiencies and lower the building's waste output.

The Delta Institute of Chicago assisted the Mart in gaining its LEED certification. "We are proud to have helped the Merchandise Mart reach this significant milestone again and excited about the precedent this sets for other historic buildings here in Chicago and beyond," said Jean Pogge, Delta CEO.

"The Merchandise Mart continues to be a leader in green buildings, demonstrating innovative ways to move the market for efficient operations and environmental friendly products," said Kevin Dick, Project Manager of Delta Institute Certifications Programs. "As with its first certification, the Mart will set the bar for existing buildings around the world."

MMPI developed a comprehensive exterior and hardscape management plan, including an integrated pest management, erosion control, and landscape plan. An online, paperless dispatch center focuses on finding further efficiencies in scheduling, tracks equipment usage, and helps tenants dispatch service requests quickly and effectively. A comprehensive energy-management plan pilots new technologies and efficiency programs.

The Mart utilizes drought-tolerant plants in all planters to reduce water consumption, and employs an integrated pest-management plan to reduce harmful toxins that pollute air and water.

The Merchandise Mart provides multiple alternative transportation options, including access to public transportation (CTA), bicycle storage and on-site shower facilities for riders, and an I-GO hybrid car-sharing program, which is available 24/7 to Mart staff and tenants.

MMPI also implemented strategies to improve water performance and reduce the quantity of water needed for the building including the installation of efficient plumbing fixtures and fittings and effective cooling tower water management.

Within the energy and atmosphere category, MMPI continued to enhance a comprehensive system-level metering and measuring system, along with refrigeration management and emissions reduction reporting. MMPI has been practicing green stewardship for years and many operational policies promoting energy efficiency and operational excellence are in place but metering and measuring different mechanical loads allows MMPI to lower usage in key areas.

As part of leading a building-wide commitment to utilize natural light where possible, MMPI has converted common area lighting to CFL and LED, retrofitted all Exit lights to be more energy efficient, and has reduced light usage in the loading dock area by utilizing split lighting levels and light circuits to create a more manageable and economical lighting level in off-hours.

MMPI has implemented a comprehensive sustainable purchasing program, resulting in a reduction in mercury in lamps, an audit of the building's waste stream, durable good purchases, and alterations and improvements to the building to lower solid waste output. MMPI purchases products with recycled content and those that mitigate poor indoor air quality and pollution of waterways, such as air-friendly paints and nontoxic cleaning products.

As host to a large volume of tenants in office, retail, and wholesale-showroom spaces, MMPI is able to offer "community" economies in bulk purchasing supplies and products. As such, the results of its green-purchasing practices are far-reaching beyond just meeting the needs of MMPI. The Mart's tenants and staff use recycled paper for all business purposes. A building-wide recycling program includes paper, cardboard, plastics, bottles, cans, electronics, batteries, lamps, ballasts, and construction and demolition materials.

MMPI is also committed to improving the quality of the indoor environment by utilizing carbon dioxide sensors to regulate outside air delivery and superior filtration to reduce particulates.

The MMPI construction team updated the guidelines document to make all of the projects at The Mart conform to

LEED guidelines and ensures that construction activity in the building does not contribute to poor indoor air quality. This team is responsible for such projects as selecting sustainable construction materials, filtering return air to maintain indoor air quality, and implementing new standards to reinforce MMPI's commitment to sustainability. For example, low- and no-VOC paints are the paints of choice for construction/remodeling projects and tradeshow build-outs.

The green-cleaning policy adopted requires that all cleaning products meet high indoor air quality standards per the Green Seal certification program. The Merchandise Mart's Low Environmental Impact Cleaning policy limits the use of potentially hazardous chemical-cleaning agents and requires that all cleaning products be nontoxic in their undiluted state, consist of ingredients that exhibit biodegradability, and have recyclable primary packaging.

The Merchandise Mart features the "Green Spot" on the first floor to educate building guests, showcase the sustainable products of our showroom tenants and demonstrate our commitment to sustainability. The Green Spot includes a life-size timeline outlining the most notable events and accomplishments in the sustainable movement both in Chicago and throughout the world since the early 20th century. It also showcases green, eco-friendly or sustainable products from our incredible tenant roster of industry front runners and innovation leaders who have embraced sustainable design.

## About LEED

LEED was developed to define and clarify the term "green building" by establishing a common standard of measurement — a benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance buildings. To earn LEED certification, a building must meet certain prerequisites and performance criteria within five key areas of environmental health: 1) sustainable site development, 2) water savings, 3) energy efficiency, 4) materials selection, and 5) indoor environmental quality. Projects are awarded Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum certification, depending on the number of credits achieved.

Rather than focusing on the construction of efficient and environmentally responsive buildings, as is the basis for much of the LEED series (such as LEED for New Construction [LEED-NC], LEED for Core & Shell [LEED-CS], and LEED for Commercial Interiors [LEED-CI]), LEED-EB helps building owners and managers measure operations, improvements, and maintenance of their facilities on a consistent scale. The certification can be applied to both existing buildings and to projects previously certified under LEED-NC or LEED-CS. The goal: to maximize operational efficiency while minimizing environmental impacts.

## The Merchandise Mart LEED Journey

1986: The Merchandise Mart began operating the world's largest off-peak cooling system, which manufactures as much as 2 million pounds of ice per night. To this day, it helps cool not only The Mart, but also dozens of

neighboring buildings.

1990: The Mart began using Green Seal-approved green-cleaning products.

1991: The Mart implemented a recycling program, which now includes all forms of paper products, glass, lamps, batteries, aluminum, and construction materials.

1996: MMPI became one of the first major property owners in downtown Chicago to enter into an agreement with the district cooling system (now known as Thermal Chicago Corp.), thus contributing to the national effort to reduce the discharge of ozone-damaging chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

2005: MMPI worked with the Delta Institute in its Phase I analysis to see if it could achieve LEED certification.

2006: MMPI registered with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for LEED and wrote the programs to implement changes.

2006: Merchandise Mart Properties Inc. (MMPI) joined Clean Air Counts, a voluntary initiative to reduce smoke-forming pollutants and energy consumption in the Greater Chicago area. Through recommended strategies, The Mart reduced 264,018 pounds of VOC pollution, in part by switching from high-VOC to low-VOC cleaning products.

2007: The Mart was the first MMPI/Vornado property to become LEED certified.

2007/2008: MMPI begins working with the Clinton Climate Initiative; with its help, the organization has engaged an energy service company (ESCO) to conduct a preliminary review and evaluation of the building to plan for further energy-reducing and environmental initiatives.

2008-2013: Participate in utility sponsored retrofit programs, including ComEd Smart Ideas and Peoples Gas Natural Gas Savings Program.

2010: Participated in the U.S. Department of Energy's L-Prize Competition through the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance for the evaluation of the next generation LED replacement lamp for the 60-watt incandescent lamp.

2011: The Mart engaged Delta Institute again in 2011 to lead the recertification process with the goal of achieving Gold Certification under the LEED Operations & Maintenance standard.

2012: Facilitated 35 tenants representing 225,000 square feet of showroom space to upgrade lighting and receiving the 179D Federal Tax deduction.

2012: Initiated a collection service for compostable materials that is utilized by more than 16 food service vendors and trade show operations.

2013: Joined Retrofit Chicago Initiative to reduce energy use by 20% by 2015.

2013: The Mart earns LEED-EB Gold certification.

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