

## Going for Platinum



Chuck Merydith  
Executive Editor

**D**esigning a project that is certified by the U.S. Green Building Council under the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) program requires a strong commitment and an understanding that an investment today will pay off for decades to come. Achieving higher certification levels requires even more diligence, but more projects are meeting those challenges, as our article on page 26 indicates.

To reach those lofty goals, designers are turning to total-precast concrete solutions for the LEED-rated designs. These components offer a variety of benefits that help boost a project's efficiency. Precast concrete can assist projects in attaining credits in the following categories:

- **Sustainable Sites 5.1** (Site Development: Protect Habitat): By delivering components as they are needed, precasters help minimize site impact.
- **Sustainable Sites 7.1–7.2** (Heat Island Effect, Non-roof and Roof): Light-colored concrete for walls and roofs helps minimize heat islands.
- **Energy and Atmosphere 1** (Optimize Energy Performance): Precast concrete's thermal mass regulates peak temperatures.
- **Materials and Resources 2.1–2.2** (Construction Waste Management): Precast concrete's off-site production eliminates on-site construction

waste and optimizes in-plant material use.

- **Materials and Resources 4.1–4.2** (Recycled Content): Precast concrete can use a number of recycled products, such as steel reinforcement, fly ash, and blast-furnace slag.
- **Materials and Resources 5.1–5.2** (Local/Regional Materials): Most precast concrete components are made with local materials, and they are typically transported less than 200 miles to the site.
- **Innovation & Design Process 1.1–1.4** (Exceptional Performance): Precasters can help create unique systems that aid sustainability goals.
- **Innovation & Design Process 2.1** (LEED Accredited Professional): More precasters have staff who are LEED accredited professionals to assist the design team.

A number of precasters are also incorporating green processes at their plants, as indicated by our feature on page 36. Some are even producing LEED buildings for their own use, as we report on page 6.

Precasters are sensitive to the needs of designers looking to create sustainable designs. Please talk with your local manufacturer as soon as the design process begins in order to ensure that precast concrete can assist your project team in reaching its green goals. ■



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