



Portola Hotel & Spa Earns LEED Silver Certification from USGBC



Setting the bar for environmentally-conscious hotels in Central California, Portola Hotel & Spa, located in the heart of Monterey, was recently granted its Silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Portola Hotel & Spa becomes one of only three hotels in all of California and one of only six hotels in the United States to earn this level of accreditation in the Existing Building (EB) category.

As an independent hotel brand, and an existing building, Portola Hotel & Spa achieved this certification as a result of a longstanding commitment by the hotel ownership, management and staff to reduce its environmental impact and implement new green initiatives. Portola Hotel & Spa's dedication started with a few key team members more than two years ago and grew to include all of its employees along with guests and locals who provide continued support.

"The green experience at Portola Hotel & Spa is reflective of our commitment to the environment and preserving our coast's extraordinary natural beauty," said Janine Chicourrat, general manager of the hotel. "Guests appreciate the everyday sustainable practices at the hotel, which is very rewarding, and locals appreciate our commitment to the community. Achieving Silver LEED Certification is an added testament to our passion and efforts and we are proud to be an environmental leader not only in Central California, but across the state and country."

Green Features in Guestrooms

As a part of its journey to attain Silver LEED Certification, Portola Hotel & Spa completed a variety of enhancements that build upon the guest experience, including a renovation of its guestrooms. The newly remodeled 379 guestrooms, including 10 suites, feature eco-friendly bath amenities, which are completely biodegradable, including all packaging; Green Label Plus carpet in all guestrooms, certified by the Carpet & Rug Institute for low volatile organic compounds (VOC); low or no VOC paints; environmentally-friendly custom designed mattresses; Energy Star 42" flat screen televisions and refrigerators; low-flow water fixtures; and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products.

Portola Hotel & Spa also implemented a comprehensive program intended to improve indoor air quality. All employees have been trained to follow construction guidelines that limit VOC in paints, adhesives and sealants; regular, rigorous inspections of the air-conditioning system is conducted through building retro-commissioning; and the enzyme-based laundry detergents are used for cleaning linens and towels. Furthermore, Portola is the first hotel in Central and Northern California to employ a water-based cleaning system that is more powerful than bleach, eliminating the use of harsh chemicals.

Hotel-wide changes include energy-efficient lighting upgrades; new carpet in Jacks Restaurant and Lounge made from rapidly renewable and all-natural latex and jute, making it 100 percent compostable; low or no VOC paints; wallpaper made with 20 percent post-consumer recycled material; water-conserving faucet aerators in all public restrooms, which reduce water consumption from 2.2

gallons per minute (gpm) to only 0.5 gpm; and sub-meters for landscaping to monitor how much water is being used and to more quickly identify leaks.

Portion of Electricity Generated On-site

Portola Hotel & Spa's hot water needs are met with two natural gas fired cogeneration micro-turbines that generate on-site electricity while simultaneously producing hot water. Portola is the first property in Monterey to allow visitors to offset their carbon footprint with Renewable Energy Credits, balancing out a guest's stay or an entire conference.



In addition, Portola Hotel & Spa purchased two year's worth of carbon offsets. Based on annual consumption of electric kilowatts and therms of natural gas, this initiative offsets 100 percent of the property's carbon emissions or roughly 2,035 metric tons of carbon dioxide, which is equivalent to planting 36,440 fully mature trees, or not driving nine million miles in an average U.S. passenger car. Beyond its on-property efforts, Portola Hotel & Spa is involved in environmental projects within the community, including the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program, designed to raise awareness of the importance of making ocean-friendly seafood choices. The hotel is a member of the USGBC Recycled Paper Coalition, the Green Business Partnership, the Green Meeting Industry Council and the EPA's WasteWise program, and is a recipient of the Monterey Bay Area Green Business Program's green certification. Additionally, for 17 consecutive years, Portola Hotel & Spa has received the California Integrated Waste Management Board's Waste Reduction Awards Program (WRAP) award for its innovative and proactive recycling initiatives toward achieving the goal of diverting 70 percent of all waste otherwise sent to municipal landfill.

This year, Portola Hotel & Spa created the Green LEEDers to help the hotel get involved in community clean-up initiatives, and in conjunction with Save our Shores' Adopt-A-Beach program, has made Del Monte Beach in Monterey its very own.

Outside Company Advised on LEED

Ausonio Inc. advised Portola Hotel & Spa on LEED standards and guided them through the certification process. "The leadership at the Portola Hotel & Spa was enthusiastic about implementing sustainable practices that would distinguish them from their peers," said Joe Piedimonte, green building consultant for Ausonio. "By targeting the LEED standard they opted for a national standard that is reviewed by experts outside of their organization."

Portola Hotel & Spa also tapped into Ausonio's green building expertise as it performed many of the sustainable upgrades including the use of Forest Stewardship Council lumber as trim and baseboards.

In compliance with LEED requirements all guestrooms are nonsmoking. The Monterey Conference Center is in the process of pursuing LEED certification. If achieved, Portola Hotel & Spa and the adjacent Monterey Conference Center will be the only hotel and conference center in all of California to receive dual LEED Certifications.