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Green Building Update

an Allen Matkins
market intelligence
publication

Allen Matkins
attorneys at law

September 24, 2010

[Schwarzenegger pushes renewable energy bill](#)

Environmental Leader - Sep 2

Governor Schwarzenegger vows to keep pushing an ambitious renewable energy bill that the state legislature failed to pass. He plans to work on the bill while negotiating the delayed California budget. The bill requires California public utilities to obtain 33% of their power from solar, wind, geothermal and biomass.

GREEN BUILDING FOCUS

[California's zero net energy plan](#)

California Public Utilities Commission - Sep 7

The California Public Utilities Commission, along with representatives from commercial buildings, clean energy, finance, technology and architecture sectors, has officially released the state's [Zero Net Energy \(ZNE\) Action Plan](#) for new buildings. The plan hopes to reduce the state's five billion square feet of commercial property space from being the largest energy consumer to being a "net zero" energy user by 2030. California's commercial property space consumes 38% of the state's total power supply. But buildings could be constructed to use 43% less energy through currently available energy-saving building design, practices and technologies, according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

[Op/Ed - Zero net energy must make economic sense](#)

Green Building Insider - Sept 15

By Bryan Jackson and Parke Blair

For widespread adoption, ZNE must make economic sense after (a) purchase and installation costs, (b) maintenance costs, and (c) replacement costs. Pay-back of these costs should occur well ahead of the replacement cycle. Energy pricing volatility can fatally delay pay-back periods. A ZNE building may put energy onto the grid to zero out energy it pulls from the grid, but if the cost of energy pulled from the grid exceeds the price earned by putting energy onto the grid, then the net zero building loses money and its pay-back period is lengthened. So, if the system used to achieve ZNE is expensive to buy and install, requires costly maintenance, is inefficient, and provides a payback period that exceeds its replacement cycle, then the ZNE system does not make economic sense.

Geothermal ground source heat pumps ("GSHP") may provide ZNE technology that makes economic sense. GSHP helps end-users avoid two or three life cycle replacement costs, require little maintenance, has near zero lifetime degradation, and is 400% - 500% more efficient than most other ZNE systems. HVAC systems, which are detailed in the CUP's ZNE Plan, approximate 85% efficiency, loses 3% - 5% efficiency every year after installation, and has payback periods that approximate the replacement cycles.

[Upcoming CALGreen Seminars](#)

Green Technology - Sep 13

The California Building Standards Commission and the California Department of

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Allen Matkins is a full-service law firm with over 230 attorneys practicing in seven offices throughout California. Some of the areas of focus at Allen Matkins include green and sustainable construction, construction, corporate, real estate, project finance, business litigation, taxation, land use, environmental, bankruptcy, creditors' rights, intellectual property and employment and labor law. [More...](#)

SPONSORS

Housing will host a series of regional half-day seminars on California's green building code, which becomes mandatory on January 1, 2011, for all new construction. These seminars will provide an overview of the new standards, voluntary tier structure, checklists and code publication dates. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Philadelphia: green buildings lab for U.S.](#)

Reuters - Sep 4

A combination of state and federal funding will create a center for green building research in Philadelphia. The "Energy Innovation Hub" will bring together researchers from the world of academia, the private sector and two national laboratories in a concerted effort to save energy, cut carbon and help to position the U.S. at the forefront of green building and retrofitting design.

[Green building takes off in real estate slump](#)

NPR - Sep 8

Green building is the bright spot in an otherwise dull U.S. real estate market as owners look to lower utility bills. It now accounts for nearly one-third of new U.S. construction, up from 2% in 2005, according to McGraw-Hill Construction. Click [here](#) to listen to the story.

[Lower fees for green building in Phoenix](#)

City of Phoenix - Sep 8

Starting October 1, the City of Phoenix will offer money-saving incentives, funded by the U.S. DOE, to promote green construction in homes and businesses.

[LEED improving with criticism](#)

Mother Nature Network - Sep 9

As green building booms, the LEED rating system has faced criticism including concern from human health experts and energy efficiency problems with certain LEED certified buildings. The USGBC is listening and working to improve the LEED system.

[Online green building education program](#)

USGBC / Colorado State University - Sep 8

The Institute for the Built Environment at Colorado State University is offering its Green Building Certification Program and its Green Homes Certificate Program online starting in October. Click [here for course information](#).

[Chicago has the most LEED buildings](#)

grist - Sep 8

Chicago has the highest number of LEED-certified buildings in the U.S. at 124 and the highest square footage of green rooftops at four million square feet.

[Hemp: new green building material](#)

Green House - Sep 12

In Asheville, N.C., three homes are being built with thick hemp walls. This new use of hemp reflects an increasing effort to make homes more energy-efficient using sustainable/renewable materials.



GREEN BUILDING PROJECTS

[UMD and LSC earn LEED certification](#)

Duluth News Tribune - Sep 13

University of Minnesota Duluth's Bagley Outdoor Classroom and Lake Superior College's new Academic and Student Services Building earned LEED certification. The 2,000-square-foot Bagley Outdoor Classroom used a minimal building footprint, passive solar heat, a grid-connected solar photovoltaic system, super insulation and recycled building materials.

[Norwich U's LEED Gold dorm](#)

Mother Nature Network - Sep 8

Vermont's Norwich University's South Hall dormitory is the University's first LEED Gold building featuring 91.5% diversion of the construction waste, use of regionally materials and purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates equal to 120% of the expected energy consumption for the next two years.

[Utah's first LEED Gold medical building](#)

Standard-Examiner - Sep 10

An Ogden orthopedic clinic is the first medical building in Utah to earn LEED Gold featuring low VOC materials, large skylights, energy-efficient windows, solar hot water, and a digital X-ray machine.

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