

LEED AP On-Staff at Commercial Carpets of America & Alexandria Carpet One Floor & Home

Alexandria, VA April 2009

If you've worked on a project with LEED certification as the goal, you know how hard it can be to navigate the requirements for the USGBC rating system. That's why Commercial Carpets of America is proud to announce the accreditation of Chris Moline, Residential Group Manager as a LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP).

"Often you can hear throughout the flooring industry 'Our product will get you LEED points' or 'This is a LEED-certified product,'" said Moline. "Well, it's just not that easy and green-washing abounds in this and many other industries."

"In fact, the US Green Building Council does not endorse any product," said Moline. "It is the *attributes* of products, *how* they are made, and *where* they are made, among other factors, which can *contribute* to the achievement of points under the different paths available to building owners and tenants."

Here is a breakdown of the point path to the various certification levels:
Certified = 21-26 points;
Silver = 27-31 points;
Gold = 32-41 points;
Platinum = 42-57 points.

With such a low number of points, so much to gain in their achievement, and so many variables in the achievement of each, it's understandable why a misguided novice would throw the "p" word around so loosely.

For example:

Assume you are moving into an existing space and are going to gut the interior finishing's and start over. You should be aware of the following (this is not in any sense an exhaustive list):

-Watch what you send to a landfill:

If you divert 50% or more of your construction waste from a landfill by weight or volume, you get a point... Materials and Resources 2.1, Divert 50% from Landfill. Make that 75% diverted and you get 2 points... go to 95% and you get a whopping 3 points for Exemplary Performance.

-You can donate items left on-site by previous tenants and count them towards goals for the same credit (donating used furnishings, carpet, etc... to Habitat For Humanity is one way of diverting waste from a landfill).

What types of finish materials can help you achieve various credits?

-Low VOC paints (good for your tenants and the environment are accounted for under Indoor Environmental Quality credit 4.2 Paints and

Coatings)

-Use carpet (or anything else) manufactured within 500 miles of the project (MR5.1 Regional Materials.) If it's CRI Green Label Plus, you're even better off - EQ4.3, not to mention if it's made of a high percentage of post-consumer recycled content MR4.1)

Go even further by specifying 20% of your materials that have been extracted and manufactured within 500 miles and you get another coveted point.

-Use only adhesives on-site that abide by SCAQMD 1168 standards.

-Specifying wool carpet (wool is a renewable resource and can be counted under MR6 Rapidly Renewable Materials along with linoleum, bamboo, cork and more.)

-How much it would cost to buy goods you intend to reuse or purchased used (MR3.1 Resource Reuse).

And so much more. But the materials in and of themselves do not get you the credit. It is given based of the percentage of your job total either by weight, volume, cost or replacement value relative to the job as a whole.

And some issues are non-negotiable such as environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) control, having a collection and storage area for recyclables, and meeting IAQ and certain energy standards. You could earn 41 points and not achieve certification if you fail to meet any of the 6 pre-requisites:

- Fundamental Commissioning
- Minimum Energy Performance
- CFC Reduction in HVAC&R Equipment
- Storage and Collection of Recyclables
- Minimum IAQ Performance
- Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) Control

In fact, trying to figure this out without the assistance of someone who has experience and accreditation can be mind-numbing. As Moline noted "I'll speak from experience that learning the materials and passing the required certification exam (to achieve the LEEP AP certification) was one of the most daunting exercises I've undertaken in my professional career."

About CCA:

Commercial Carpets of America, Inc., sells and installs a wide range of flooring products for commercial and residential use. Founded in 1973, CCA is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, and is a member of both Carpet One and StarNet Flooring Cooperative. In the past 36 years, CCA has worked with more than 100,000 clients and installed more than 90 million square feet of flooring products.

For more Information, questions, or comments, please call 703/370-0000 or visit <http://www.commercialcarpetsofamerica.com/>.