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GTL Fort Worth Technology Center Wins LEED Gold

The GTL Technology Center in Fort Worth went for the gold – and won it. The U.S. Green Building Council has certified that the facility has achieved the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)® Gold certification, one of only 21 Lockheed Martin properties to be so recognized. The certification was due not only to the environmental efforts made in the design and finish of the building, but because of the collaborative team that worked together to finish the interior of the building.

When GTL sought out a single replacement for several different facilities in the Fort Worth area, green was one of the top criteria of the list in the selection of the building – both from the environmental and cost aspect. They found one – a building without interior finishes and with a landlord and general contractor who recognized the importance of the corporation's green initiatives.

"We looked at several different locations to consolidate three different leased spaces into one," explained Dave Venincasa, GTL Facilities Director. "We settled upon our current location because the core and shell building itself was already LEED Gold certified. That was an important issue for us and from a cost perspective, in the terms of the lease and the long-term operating costs, we're going to be saving some green."

LEED certification takes into account energy use, lighting, water and material use as well as incorporating a variety of other sustainable strategies; it verifies environmental performance, occupant health and financial return. LEED was established for market leaders to design and construct buildings that protect and save resources while also making good economic sense.

One of the keys to achieving Gold was the teamwork between Lockheed Martin, the landlord, the design engineers, architect and the general contractor responsible for finishing the interior of the building. Several factors were taken into consideration including optimizing energy performance; flexible control of the lighting, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems; and overall innovation in efficient design. The wattage reduction in the facility was 41 percent below the Fort Worth area building code requirements.

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"Our desire was to do the right thing; the LEED recognition just ended up being a natural route," Venincasa explained. "We're taking advantage of green initiatives in all new facilities and when we retrofit existing facilities. It's simple to do, and over the long term, in some cases, the extra money we pay for the green initiatives are paid back through lower utility costs and reductions in the corporation's carbon footprint."

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is an internationally recognized green building certification system, providing third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies intended to improve performance in metrics such as energy savings, water efficiency, CO^2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

The LEED Green Building Rating System™ is a feature-oriented rating system that awards buildings points for satisfying specified green building criteria. The six major environmental categories of review include: Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Energy and Atmosphere, Materials and Resources, Indoor Environmental Quality and Innovation and Design. Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels of LEED green building certification are awarded based on the total number of points earned within each LEED category. Since 1998, the U.S. Green Building Council has grown to encompass more than 7,000 projects in the United States and 30 countries covering 1.062 billion square feet of development area.