

Case Study

“SpecLink highlighted all LEED requirements throughout the project and was extremely helpful in identifying what we needed.”

Achieving a gold standard in ‘Green’ Design

HGE Inc., Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Planners (HGE) believes strongly in providing quality design for every project, and the company’s experienced personal allow for a valuable continuity of design expertise. Their almost 60 years in the business is a testimony to the company’s long-standing excellent service and success.

Headquartered in coastal Coos Bay, metropolitan areas. Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) Projects are not as widespread and common in the rural areas where HGE has most of its business, but Joseph Slack, Vice President and Principal Architect, is a LEED Accredited Professional (AP). HGE was selected to provide full architectural services for the Coos Bay Fire Station Headquarters, and having a LEED AP on board was a critical factor in HGE’s selection.

The need

Green design and construction is becoming more and more prevalent for construction projects, especially in the Pacific Northwest. Green standards are being added to the list of other basic requirements and are becoming mandatory for design teams on all types of projects. HGE had very little experience designing and managing LEED certified projects, so they were concerned about all the different requirements mandated by LEED. ‘We were especially concerned about navigating the LEED certification requirements during the initial design process,’ Slack said. ‘We were also concerned about the LEED-related change orders during construction that would affect the budget.’ Not having experience in dealing with LEED requirements, the design team knew they would



be challenged to learn the specific nuances of “green design.” Their goal on this project was to reach Gold Certification, which made them pay particular attention to the most appropriate LEED credits for the project.

“The local government and population were very interested in this project and we wanted to make certain it became one of our finest accomplishments,” said Slack.

The solution

HGE was already using SpecLink software for its design development and construction document specifications, and the LEED requirements were readily identifiable in SpecLink.

So HGE decided not to hire a LEED consultant and opted instead to learn first-hand about how LEED affects the design process. “We needed to identify and understand all the LEED credits for every area of the project, and SpecLink listed all of them for us.” Slack said.

Using the software with all the LEED certification information was a learning experience for the team that caused them to spend more time on certain phases of the project.

The experience they gained will definitely help them in the future. HGE’s project team was impressed with SpecLink’s global productivity features that allowed the technical staff to prepare specs for printing without using an editor or typing staff. “Removing the need for a typing pool was a definite value-added benefit of using SpecLink,” said Slack.

The outcome

After several design modifications, the Coos Bay Fire Station Headquarters achieved Gold LEED Certification – just as the design team had planned. “The built-in spec sections in SpecLink pertaining to LEED certification saved us a tremendous amount of time,” Slack said. “We were able to “toggle” back and forth from section to section to see the appropriate LEED requirements for each one – it was a huge benefit and time-saver.”

The COOS Bay Fire Station included numerous green design features in categories such as water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality.

They used solar hot water panels to obtain renewable energy efficiency, storm filter catch basins to achieve storm water management, and a rainwater harvesting system to attain water-efficient landscaping.

HGE INC.

“It was truly a total commitment to green design from beginning to end,” Slack said. “We are very proud of this project, and the proficiency we achieved will help our overall business in future”.

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