

# THE FIVE ELEMENTS



## LEED

LEED is an acronym that stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The U.S. Green Building Council has developed a suite of LEED Green Building Rating systems that allows builders, owners, and tenants to evaluate the impact of their design on energy and environmental issues. They can obtain points toward LEED certification of a project resulting from choices they make while designing, constructing, and operating a new or existing building or major renovation, schools and commercial interiors.

Despite claims you may see, no product is “LEED certified.” Only buildings can be LEED certified. However, products you choose to include in your project can contribute points towards attaining different levels of certification.

Tile can contribute to LEED 2009 points in the following ways:

- Recycled Materials Content (MR Credits 4)
- Regional Materials (MR Credit 5)
- Low-Emitting Materials (IEQ Credit 4.3)
- Heat Island Effect (SS Credit 7.1)
- There also may be additional ways for our tile products to contribute to LEED points; consult your LEED Accredited Professional.

In the latest LEED from USGBC documentation a qualifying project can receive LEED Certification in four different levels depending on how many “points” they achieve. There are six separate categories encompassing a total of 69 possible points.

- Innovation & Design Process - 5 points
- Sustainable Sites - 14 points
- Water Efficiency - 5 points
- Energy & Atmosphere - 17 points
- Materials & Resources - 13 points
- Indoor Environmental Quality - 15 points

**The four-certification levels are: Certified 26 - 32**

**Silver 33 - 38**

**Gold 39 - 51**

**Platinum 52 +**

For more information on the USGBC and the LEED program, you may want to visit their website at [www.usgbs.org](http://www.usgbs.org)

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## The Green Side of Choosing Tile

**Life Cycle**-Porcelain, Natural Stone, Glass and Stainless are some of the longest lasting tile products on the market today. Unlike carpet, vinyl, or laminate flooring which have to be replaced periodically, properly installed tile will last a lifetime.

**Indoor Air Quality**-Indoor air quality is a hot topic and for good reason. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) contribute to a wide variety of health problems and are significant cause of "sick building syndrome." Since tile is fired in kilns to extremely high temperatures, there are no volatile organics in the finished product that can be released into the air we breath; literally "zero." In addition, there are adhesives and grouts available that contain zero or very low VOCs. Some carpet, vinyl, and wood flooring contain low VOCs, but none can compare to zero!

**Recycling**- Tile factories today are "closed loop," reusing water and materials. They send only negligible amounts of scrap to landfills and waste water to treatment facilities.

**Regional Availability**- With tile manufacturers and suppliers located in regions of United States, tile and installation products made with local raw materials are widely available. This regional availability reduces the amount of energy consumption and air emissions associated with shipping to your job site.

**Hypoallergenic**- Tile is inhospitable to dust mites, mold, germs, and bacteria and often is used to replace carpet for people with allergies or asthma.

**Low Maintenance**- Tile is easily cleaned, often only with warm water, eliminating the need for chemicals and cleaners needed to maintain other types of floors.

## Life Cycle Cost Chart

FLOOR FINISH	INSTALLED COST	LIFE CYCLE COST	EXPECTED LIFE (Y)	COST PER YEAR
QUARRY TILE	\$6.83	\$ 16.13	50	\$ 0.32
GLAZED CERAMIC FLOOR TILE	\$7.00	\$ 16.30	50	\$ 0.33
GLAZED PORCELAIN	\$8.34	\$ 7.64	50	\$ 0.35
MOSAIC TILE	\$8.20	\$ 17.50	50	\$ 0.35
UNGLAZED PORCELAIN	\$8.30	\$ 17.60	50	\$ 0.35
NATURAL HARDWOOD	\$9.31	\$ 20.80	50	\$ 0.42
TRAVERTINE	\$12.50	\$ 21.80	50	\$ 0.44
MARBLE	\$21.00	\$ 30.30	25	\$ 0.61
MAN MADE HARDWOOD	\$9.58	\$ 18.51	25	\$ 0.74
CEMENT TERRAZZO	\$14.88	\$ 24.27	30	\$ 0.81
STAINED CONCRETE	\$12.40	\$ 24.60	25	\$ 0.98
CARPET	\$3.22	\$ 6.50	6	\$ 1.08
RESIN TERRAZZO	\$8.50	\$ 16.53	15	\$ 1.10
VINYL	\$6.90	\$ 13.90	10	\$ 1.39
POURED EPOXY	\$8.18	\$ 15.18	10	\$ 1.52

\*per square foot