

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Earth Advantage Institute is proud to introduce its sustainable building program, Earth Advantage® Commercial. The commercial program is a third-party certification that is poised to become the industry-accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance small commercial buildings.

Currently in its pilot phase, Earth Advantage Commercial brings an affordable, holistic green rating system to the small commercial market, enabling developers to obtain a rigorous and recognized third-party certification for new buildings.

*Approximately 95% of new commercial buildings in the United States are less than 50,000 sq. ft., but existing green building programs often do not meet those buildings' needs.*



**Earth Advantage Institute** is a nonprofit organization that works with the building industry to help implement sustainable building practices. Its mission is to create an immediate, practical, and cost-effective path to sustainability and to the reduction of carbon in the built environment.

### Earth Advantage Institute Programs

- New Homes Certification
- Remodel Certification
- Community Certification
- Commercial Certification
- Carbon Advantage Consulting
- Education & Professional Certification Courses
- Technical Services
- Research Services

### Earth Advantage Commercial

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### PILOT PROGRAM





*“The Earth Advantage Commercial certification fills an underserved construction market where owners and developers are now seeking the bottomline and branding benefits of green building certification.”*

– Clark Brockman, SERA Architects

## Helping the Small Commercial Market Go Green

Earth Advantage Commercial was born from a previous Earth Advantage program that certified several prominent buildings, including Nike World Headquarters. In 2009, Earth Advantage Institute overhauled the Earth Advantage Commercial standard, refined it to more effectively target the underserved small commercial building market. Program development included the engagement of expert stakeholders from multiple sectors to refine and develop program protocol, resulting in a new prescriptive standard.

## Reducing the Soft Costs of Certification

Earth Advantage Commercial eliminates the need for energy modeling by including a prescriptive or menu-like approach for energy efficiency (with the integration of **New Buildings Institute’s Core Performance Guide - Oregon Edition**). Each measure in the menu has been screened for cost effectiveness and efficacy so project teams know that the measures are good investments for their projects.

The Earth Advantage Commercial program streamlines the documentation and administration process by directly helping project teams incorporate measures into their design and construction documents, eliminating the need for lengthy studies or explanations for how measures are achieved. In addition, the documentation process leverages processes already required for other purposes (i.e., code compliance documentation for lighting). Finally,

rather than a documentation based verification process, measures are verified in the field by Earth Advantage staff.

## Join Our Pilot Program THROUGH 2010

Earth Advantage Institute is accepting pilot projects for the Earth Advantage Commercial program. During this pilot phase, seven to ten projects will be screened and selected by the commercial team. The commercial team will work closely with each project team to provide extensive guidance, from design through certification.

## Is My Project Eligible?

1. Commercial projects with preference given to schools, retail, and office projects
2. Early design phase only: developments currently under construction are not eligible
3. Discrete buildings between 10,000 and 70,000 sq. ft.
4. Within **Energy Trust of Oregon** territory (affiliated utilities: NW Natural, Portland General Electric, Pacific Power or Cascade Natural Gas)

## Getting Paid to Build Green

Pilot projects will not only benefit from low soft costs of certification and reduced operating costs, but projects may also be eligible to receive cash incentives from **Energy Trust of Oregon**. Energy Trust’s New Buildings Program offers financial assistance for satisfying Earth Advantage Commercial energy-related criteria.

## The Five Pillars of Earth Advantage Certification



**ENERGY** By using high performance equipment, appropriate controls and better strategies for electric lighting and air sealing, the energy use of a building can be reduced, resulting in reduced energy bills and carbon emissions. Certified projects incorporate many cost-effective strategies to reduce energy use by 10 to 30% over current energy codes. In addition, building owners are given tools to help track and manage energy use into the future.



**HEALTH** In commercial projects, indoor air and access to daylight play a major role in overall health, inhabitant performance (e.g., office employees and students), and increased sales (e.g., retail stores). Eliminating off-gassing finish materials and properly installing HVAC equipment can improve indoor air quality. Certified projects employ these strategies to reduce airborne contaminants, diminishing the chances of allergies, asthma, and other more serious health risks.



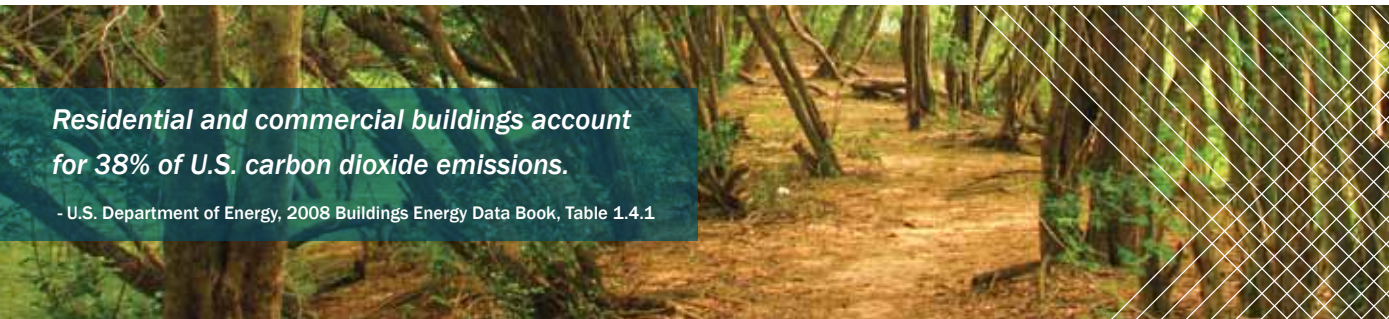
**WATER** Projects utilizing water efficient strategies help lower utility bills and reduce the amount of water wasted or needed to maintain a comfortable environment. Water shortages are a primary concern in the 21st century, and certified projects address water conservation requirements. Certified projects also employ strategies to address the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff, a major consideration for municipalities throughout Oregon.



**MATERIALS** New building construction and renovation rely heavily on natural resources. The use of construction waste management strategies combined with environmentally preferable materials ensures a better use of natural resources and reduces the embedded energy of buildings.



**LAND** Certain development practices can be used to reduce a project’s impact on the surrounding environment. From reduced light pollution and protection of native vegetation to transportation planning and community placemaking, certified projects can protect the natural environment while becoming real assets to their communities.



**Residential and commercial buildings account for 38% of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions.**

- U.S. Department of Energy, 2008 Buildings Energy Data Book, Table 1.4.1