

GREEN BUILDING INTRODUCTION: *BREEAM*

DOVETAIL PARTNERS, INC.

2008



What is BREEAM?

BREEAM is a program of the Building Research Establishment (BRE) an organization based in the UK. BREEAM is the *Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method*.

About BREEAM

Established in 1990, BREEAM uses categorical assessment measures to evaluate the environmental performance of new and existing buildings. BREEAM also assesses best practices in environmental design and management in the UK's construction and property sectors. Since 2003, various UK regulatory and government organizations are required to achieve the highest BREEAM rating levels.

Nearly 100,000 buildings in the UK have been certified using BREEAM, and around 700,000 buildings and homes are awaiting accreditation.

BREEAM has served as a model for other green building programs worldwide, and BREEAM International and BRE Global assist construction projects or regions in the development process. BRE also offers training courses for prospective assessor licenses.

BREEAM Assessments

BREEAM can be used to assess the attributes of a wide range of building types. BREEAM evaluates a range of building related components such as:

- performance in management,
- energy use,
- health and well-being,
- pollution,
- transport,
- land use,
- ecology,
- materials, and
- water.

Each category is awarded 'credits' that are weighted and added together to generate a single score, which in turn is rated as Pass, Good, Very Good, and Excellent. The awarded certificate is then frequently used for marketability.

BREEAM provides professional review of environmental impact aspects of new construction or major remodeling projects, ideally during various stages of the building process. Assessor involvement throughout a development process is preferred and ensures the design reaches the desired goal. An established fee scale determines the cost of the evaluation by a BREEAM trained assessor.

BREEAM Schemes

BREEAM EcoHomes was replaced by the *Code for Sustainable Homes* in 2007, based on the former version. *The Code*, scores new homes on Performance levels in six categories with a six-level system (i.e. Code Level 3 is similar to EcoHomes *Very Good*) to achieve sustainability standards.

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BREEAM Offices evaluates new, existing, occupied and vacant buildings. Two tools that assessors use to evaluate development are the (new or refurbished) Design and Procurement and the (existing/occupied) Management and Operation standards.

BREEAM Retail is a more flexible set of assessments to cater to various types of retail buildings, including general sales, food and customer service establishments.

BREEAM Industrial assesses industrial buildings, warehouses and distribution units of all sizes. The general assessments are conducted in a two-step design and post-construction evaluation.

BREEAM Schools covers new and refurbished schools and is based on environmental performance compliances rather than specific design elements. The UK government now requires that all new and remodeled schools achieve at least a 'very good' BREEAM assessment rating.

BREEAM also includes assessments of, prisons, courts and multi-residential buildings, as well as 'bespoke' development for those that fall outside of standard classification headings (ie: mixed-use developments, military bases, hotels, etc.).

Updates

BREEAM announced a series of changes in effect August 1st, 2008 as a response to market conditions and sustainability awareness. These new updates include: new schemes for *BREEAM Healthcare* and *BREEAM Further Education*, a new two-stage assessment process with design stage and post-construction attention, new CO2 emission regulations and a new rating level of *Outstanding*.

Uses

BREEAM evaluated buildings allow various agencies, practices or individuals to use the assessment rating for various purposes; Planners, developers, property agents, design teams and managers use scores to specify, demonstrate, promote, improve or measure the environmental sustainability performance of their buildings, and enhance marketability.

For more information:

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This overview was compiled by Dovetail Partners as part of a series of Green Building Introductions. For the most current and complete information about BREEAM, please contact their office and visit their website.