



## LEED VOLUME PROGRAM

**KOHL'S DEPARTMENT STORES**  
**143 CERTIFIED STORES AND COUNTING**

**32%** more energy efficiency than baseline stores

**50%** reduction in use of water for irrigation

**70%** increase in construction waste diversion

A photograph of a modern Kohl's department store building. The building has a tan-colored facade with large, rectangular panels. The name "KOHL'S" is prominently displayed in large, white, three-dimensional letters on the upper part of the building. In the foreground, there is a sidewalk, a street with yellow lane markings, and some landscaping including a small tree and a white spherical light fixture. The sky is overcast.

**KOHL'S**

## KOHL'S DEPARTMENT STORES

# Taking Bold Steps to Leave a Smaller Footprint

How USGBC crowns Kohl's comprehensive corporate sustainability initiatives

## A CORPORATE-WIDE COMMITMENT: BUILDING A GREEN FUTURE

Visitors to the *Kohl's Cares* website experience first hand the company's passionate commitment to the environment. Its landing page and five core sections clearly illustrate a remarkable, award-winning sustainability platform that engages employees, vendors and customers. Indeed, the entire Kohl's organization has worked hard to minimize waste, reduce energy consumption, encourage recycling and cut emissions.

A central element of the *Kohl's Cares* program is a well-entrenched corporate commitment to sustainable building. With a portfolio spanning nearly 1,100 stores and 49 states, it's understandable why the pursuit of green design, construction and store operations is vital to the initiative's success.

Kohl's began implementing green building standards in 2005. At that time, Kohl's deemed LEED certification impractical for their undertaking. The company builds on a large scale, and one-off certifications were tested and found to take longer than the fast-paced retail industry allowed. No matter, Kohl's stayed its course, incorporating contemporary green building practices into its many projects. This steadfast approach, geared towards quality and efficiency, soon proved advantageous.

With the advent of the LEED Volume Program, Kohl's was well positioned and fully prepared to capitalize on this new opportunity. Because the company had already committed to a very efficient building standard, utilizing many sustainable materials and operating practices, pursuing volume certification was a natural evolutionary step. Kohl's needed only to make minor adjustments to its practices in order to pre-certify its volume Prototype building as LEED Silver.

## SNAPSHOT: ATTRIBUTES OF A LEED CERTIFIED KOHL'S

- **Preventing pollution caused by construction activity**  
Minimizing the immediate and long-term environmental impact of construction through site-specific erosion and sedimentation control plans
- **Countering the heat island effect**  
Utilizing ENERGY STAR-rated roofing to alleviate unacceptable heat buildup
- **Improving water efficiency**  
Reducing the amount of water used for human consumption and irrigation
- **Managing the disposal of construction waste**  
Diverting construction waste away from local landfills
- **Incorporating recycled building materials**  
An estimated 20% of building materials in new Kohl's stores, as measured by cost, is recycled
- **Using regionally sourced building materials**  
Countering the impact of transporting building materials long distances
- **Purchasing green power**  
Today, 100% of the power used by a new Kohl's store comes from green energy sources
- **Blending energy efficiency & thermal comfort**  
Installing and maintaining automated systems to optimize energy use and provide continued thermal comfort
- **Maintaining air quality**  
Protecting the indoor environment by using low VOC materials, green housekeeping supplies and automated ventilation systems

## PROJECT SCALE BY LEED RATING SYSTEM

### LEED FOR RETAIL:

#### NEW CONSTRUCTION:

84 stores

### LEED FOR RETAIL:

#### COMMERCIAL INTERIORS:

1 store Gold Certified

### EXISTING BUILDINGS:

#### OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE:

108 stores (58 certified stores, 50 registered and in the performance period)

For Kohl's, policies that are good for the environment are also good for business. Through environmentally responsible practices and initiatives, such as green building design and energy management, Kohl's is reducing operating costs and creating a comfortable shopping and work environment.

## ABOUT THE LEED VOLUME PROGRAM

The LEED Volume Program is for organizations planning to certify a large number of new-construction projects or existing buildings. It works by establishing verifiable guidelines that, without compromising LEED's rigorous benchmarks standards, streamline the certification process. To learn more, visit [www.usgbc.org/leedvolume](http://www.usgbc.org/leedvolume)



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## • Offering on-site recycling

As part of its commitment to the community, all new Kohl's stores recycle office paper, cans, glass, cardboard, hangers and plastic

## BOTTOM LINE: THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF VOLUME CERTIFICATION

The LEED Volume Program has made widespread LEED certification – Kohl's measurement of choice – attainable. Importantly, Kohl's management is fully supportive of the LEED Volume Program and has committed to certify every new ground-up store. Here are some very tangible reasons why:

- Sustainable building has long been central to Kohl's brand strategy. From that standpoint, the arrival of the LEED Volume Program was perfectly timed to Kohl's green-building evolution. The integration of LEED not only helped improve building systems and processes, it also contributed measurably to each of the company's existing environmental initiatives: Maximize energy efficiency, minimize waste, improve building design, reduce emissions and encourage stakeholder engagement.
- Processes became more efficient once Kohl's volume prototypes were approved and LEED became an integral part of Kohl's new store design, construction and operations process.
  - o The volume based approach helped Kohl's justify internalizing many certification and submittal functions, thereby retaining greater project control. LEED administration is managed by Kohl's staff and not driven by consultants.
  - o Project requirements and documentation are clearly defined and meticulously monitored and maintained on Kohlaborate, an aptly named FTP site utilized for Kohl's building projects. Design submittals, construction documents and LEED documentation remain accessible during construction and certification, and are archived for on-going operations and facility management.
  - o Since 2008, the number of outside contractor companies has been reduced from over 30 to fewer than 10 very reliable partner companies, eliminating many duplicative layers of consultancy, training, and support.
- Greater accountability for consultants and contractors was realized through documentation and attainment of very precise, very specific LEED requirements. Sub-contractors receive detailed instruction and are incentivized to meet LEED metrics and project milestones. Material tracking spreadsheets, general contractor compliance forms, the centralized (Kohlaborate) documentation FTP site, ongoing data collection processes...these and other systems are now built around LEED, thus ensuring that all stores meet a verifiable level of building consistency.
- Energy consumption and costs relative to Kohl's per store benchmark data, have declined anywhere from 26% to 36%, depending on the building's footprint (see chart).

PROTOTYPE	# LOCATIONS	# CLIMATE ZONES	AVG. ENERGY SAVINGS	AVG. COST SAVINGS
Two front entrances	7	7	34.34%	33.29%
Two level	7	7	32.57%	33.14%
Front & side entrances	7	7	34.64%	33.58%
Small store	7	7	29.28%	30.65%

- Water usage improved dramatically based largely on new design and construction practices within the LEED rating system.
  - o Exterior enhancements – that cut consumption by up to 50% – included drip-line irrigation, smart weather tracking controllers, the planting of native or adaptive species, and the use of alternative water sources.

## KOHL'S DEVELOPED AND PRE-CERTIFIED THREE STORE FORMATS WITHIN THEIR LEED FOR RETAIL: NEW CONSTRUCTION VOLUME PROTOTYPE

- An 87,000 square-foot full-size store format with two variations, one with front and side entrances (FS), the other with two front entrances (2F)
- A 64,000 square-foot small store (SM)
- A two-level store that is generally 120,000 square feet (2L)

LEED is the framework for positive change in Kohl's building operations. It gives the organization a strong structure around which to initiate and implement efficiency projects, as well as to organize green or sustainable operational processes, including functions like purchasing, retro commissioning, and green cleaning.

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- o Newly specified, water-conserving in-store plumbing fixtures yielded general use water savings of up to 30%.
- Operational waste reduction has long been a key Kohl's initiative. Still, with the company's commitment to volume certification, Kohl's developed and implemented a more formal, highly successful Construction Waste Management Plan. While the plan actively pursues a minimum 50% diversion rate, most Kohl's construction sites are now attaining rates of 75% or more. By diverting nearly 17,000 tons of waste in the past year, the CWMP has produced notable savings in the company's general tipping fees.
- LEED Volume certification reviews now take, on average, one-third the time previously allocated for a one-off certification. This enables Kohl's to celebrate certifications and efficiencies more quickly, a critical advantage in the highly competitive and fast-paced world of retail sales.
- Interactions with municipal building officials have grown easier. As more towns and cities request or even require LEED certification, Kohl's remains a step ahead in offering all communities the latest in sustainable retail design and construction.
- Customer and employee satisfaction is clearly an important consideration for Kohl's. By using low VOC materials, monitoring air quality, and providing automated ventilation and climate control, Kohl's is doing all that it can to insure the comfort and quality of the in-store experience for its customers and associates.
- Other key considerations of the Kohl's LEED Volume program can be found at [www.kohlsgreenscene.com](http://www.kohlsgreenscene.com).

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Because Kohl's had long made sustainable building part of its core brand strategy, its highly experienced sustainability team did not hesitate when presented with the opportunity to participate in the LEED Volume Program. Not only did volume certification strengthen the company's many sustainability initiatives, but its comprehensive building approach also enhanced Kohl's well-established internal processes, further formalizing Kohl's corporate commitment to "protecting and conserving the environment".

Today, LEED is the framework for positive change in Kohl's building operations. It gives the organization a strong structure around which to initiate and implement efficiency projects, as well as to organize green or sustainable operational processes, including functions like purchasing, retro commissioning, and green cleaning.

Moving forward, Kohl's will benefit from third-party validation of its ongoing commitment to building green. This validation – through LEED certification – has become an essential component of the company's many interactions with federal, state and municipal governments, as well as with suppliers, customers and employees.

You might say that, for a national retailer such as Kohl's, the LEED Volume Program is a perfect fit.

## ABOUT KOHL'S DEPARTMENT STORES

Based in Menomonee Falls, WI, Kohl's (NYSE:KSS) is a family-focused, value-oriented specialty department store offering moderately priced, exclusive and national brand apparel, shoes, accessories, beauty and home products in an exciting shopping environment. Kohl's currently operates 1,089 stores in 49 states with a commitment to environmental leadership.

## TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LEED FOR VOLUME PROGRAM

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Kohl's LEED Certified locations, like this Kohl's store in Linden, NJ have the same look and feel shoppers expect from a Kohl's store, yet numerous sustainable building materials are incorporated into their design. Finishes like flooring, wall covering, paints and carpeting contain low VOCs. Kohl's also uses building materials with more than 20 percent recycled content and sources 20 percent of materials from within 500 miles of each location.



Kohl's store in Burlington, WI.

LEED certified stores are one more way Kohl's is publically demonstrating that retailers can deliver on customer expectations while also being environmentally responsible.

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