

LEED helps to 'green' Dubai

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HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's green initiative has made many companies operating in Dubai realise the effects their products are having on the environment; adopting a system like LEED, BREEAM, or Greenstar is one responsible step in the right direction of positive change.

But is this enough? Most developers have now begun to implement the LEED system on their projects and although this is a system that works very well in America can it be implemented in Dubai?

David Ball, General Manager, Landscaping Division, Hydroturf International, says:

'If we look at the LEED ratings for existing buildings one of the requirements is that a building must be fully occupied for at least 12 months prior to applying for accreditation. With the unprecedented number of buildings in Dubai at 50% occupancy or less, it seems there are very few that would even be able to apply.'

Due to the climate and landscape in Dubai, water efficiency would also need to play a much bigger role. While LEED ratings do address water conservation, again this is based on a US standard where water is much more readily available.

This is not to say that Dubai is not aware of the problem. Dubai Municipality is currently developing a new rating system specifically for the Emirate. Surely though, with access to many technological advances, research and resources such as the Emirates Green Building Council, developers should be taking the initiative to start thinking of more sustainable designs.

Ball says, 'At Hydroturf, we have been working on energy saving solutions for a number of years. We are the distributors for many leading, globally recognised companies and choose our partners carefully, ensuring that they share our values.'

One such partner is Scofield; the number one global brand in concrete colouring and a member of the US Green Building Council (USGBC). All Scofield products contribute to LEED credits across many of the sections including 'Recycled Content', 'Sustainable Sites', 'Indoor Environmental Quality', 'Regional Materials' and many more.

Another example is SolarDrive who manufacture solar panels that can be mounted onto the roof of golf carts. As golf carts are common in many of Dubai's hotels, golf clubs and now even residences such as the Jumeriah Golf Estates, this simple energy saving feature can contribute to saving up to 90% energy over regular golf carts and reducing CO2 emissions by 100%.

'We are proud to be considered market leaders and hope that others will follow our example. Some 10 years ago you could forgive companies for being ignorant to the plight of green initiatives, but as scientific developments are made and education is furthered, individual companies should be focusing on what they are doing to benefit our environment and the prospect of future generations,' he concludes.

{AME Info}