Photo-Documentation Guidelines

A Green Rater may choose to use photo-documentation to verify some LEED for Homes measures. In special circumstances, the Project Team may be asked to also provide photo-documentation to assist the Green Rater's verification efforts.

What Is Photo-Documentation?

Photo-documentation is simply the use of photographs to document that certain green measures are installed in a LEED Home. This type of documentation is particularly helpful for measures that will eventually be hidden from sight (i.e., buried underground, installed behind drywall).

When Is Photo-documentation Used?

Photo-documentation is usually used for 1 of 2 reasons:

- **Risk management**—A Green Rater may choose to use photo-documentation to permanently archive exactly what was observed while performing an on-site inspection of a LEED Home. If there is any question about that home in the future, the Green Rater can simply use the photo-documentation to demonstrate what was observed at the time of the official verification.

- **Streamlining the visual verification process**—Typically, a Green Rater has to travel to a project a minimum of 2 times to complete the verification tasks. If the Green Rater is remotely located from the project site, the travel costs may be relatively high. At a Green Rater's discretion, she or he may ask an experienced project team to photo-document an installed LEED measure to save an extra trip to a project site (thereby reducing the total verification costs of the project). For example, the foundation drainage measures (possibly part of a project's Durability Plan) may be installed and buried prior to a Green Rater's normal first visit.

Is Photo-Documentation Required?

The LEED for Homes Program does *not* require Green Raters to submit photo-documentation to USGBC as part of the formal Project Submittal Package.

However, Green Raters may be required to use photo-documentation as part of their Provider's Quality Assurance (i.e., risk management) protocols. Documentation techniques may vary from one Provider organization to the next.

Guidelines for Using Photo-Documentation

To ensure consistency in photo-documentation procedures and record-keeping practices, the following guidelines should be adhered to by all parties:

- If and when photo-documentation is used, the LEED measures in the photographs should be readily identifiable, in the following manner:
  - The photos shall be date-stamped.
  - The photos shall not be blurry or distorted.

- Several photos shall be taken for each LEED measure at varying proximity to the LEED measure. In this manner, both the general location and the specifics of the LEED measure can be observed.

- Photos of the whole house (or whole project site) shall be included as part of each set of photos taken. (The location of photo within project site must be verifiable.)

- Photos in each set shall be arranged in a logical sequence.

- The LEED measures in the photos shall be labeled (i.e., with an arrow and/or possibly a designation "letter" that are linked to a description or legend on a separate piece of paper. The description shall be cross-referenced to the arrow or letter in the photo.