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## Living Green: Environmentally friendly condos in Chicago

Maureen Wilkev on 06.17.09 | no comments | share

A few years ago, few people thought of the environmental impact of their actions beyond recycling and carpooling. Now, almost everything you do seems to be affected by the green movement. And while some developers were initially resistant to green or LEED-certified buildings because of the extra up-front costs they sometimes presented, the idea of green homes is now catching on.

Even if environmental causes don't interest you, there are perks to living in a LEED condo. In LEED certification, points are awarded for certain green elements and some of the easiest credits to get come from being located near public transportation. LEED buildings also generally cost less to heat and cool. The paints and adhesives in the finishes are low VOC, which eliminates the chemical smell.

There are several projects LEED condo projects underway or finished in Chicago. Here's a few to check out:

The South Loop's [eco18](#) is seeking Gold Level certification (that's the second highest you can get, after platinum). The building is using a geothermal loop, which stores heat in the ground during the summer for later use in the winter. This should provide all of the energy the building needs for heating and cooling 78% of the time. Its green roof will provide a reduction in stormwater runoff and also serve as a great place for residents to enjoy summer days.

[EcoLogic Lofts](#) in Bucktown will use wind turbines to generate up to 2 percent of the electricity used in the units. To improve indoor air quality, the building will be smoke-free. The building will also have a green roof and Green Kiosks in the lobbies will provide information for owners who want to continue to make the space as green as possible after closing.

And [Winthrop Club Condominiums](#) in Evanston went green mostly through site selection and materials. The condos include mostly local materials and recycled 75 percent of their waste during construction. The building will use solar panels for up to 5 percent of its energy usage. Most of the finishes are still interchangeable at Winthrop, but you can get options like low-flow toilets or bamboo floors and wool carpet.

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