

enVergie the Newsletter

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Issue 4

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enVergie consulting, LLC, is a small MBE/DBE firm providing support services for the building architectural and engineering community. Our mission is to provide tools for project teams which enable delivery of sustainable, energy efficient, functional and economical designs. Our areas of expertise include:

- **Sustainable Design**
- **Value Engineering**
- **Life Cycle Cost Management**
- **Cost Estimating**
- **Energy Conservation**

LEED version 4 update

The members of U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC) approved the new Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) version 4, which is a substantial overhaul of the current version 3. While version 4 will be launched this November, projects can register for either version until June 2015. Once a project is registered, it will proceed to certification under the same LEED version. This effectively makes version 4 a voluntary upgrade for the next two years, allowing for a long and smooth transition to the upgraded version. Major changes in version 4 for the New Construction (NC) rating sys-



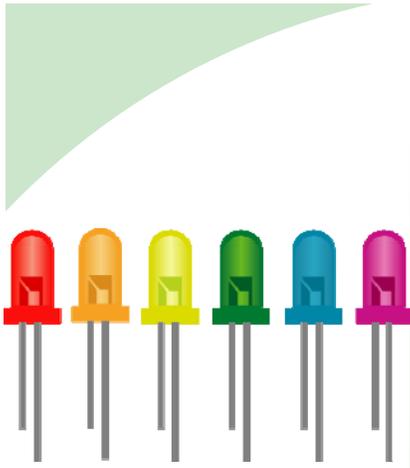
tem include a higher threshold for energy efficiency, a greater emphasis in commissioning, and a restructuring in the materials and resources credits, with more in-depth requirements in product lifecycles and chemical composition.

Construction prices continue to be stable

Despite gradual growth in the construction market, price escalation in the near future is expected to be stable. Material price is trending at about 2 to 3% escalation. Large jumps in lumber and gypsum product prices have led to significant pressure on the housing construction costs; however, the commercial market remains unaffected due to stability in the balance of materials. In addition,

although double digit unemployment in the construction industry has ended, annual labor wage increases are not expected to exceed 2% in the near future. Escalation for commercial construction project is anticipated to be about 3% in the near term.





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LED lighting evaluation

Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting is an emerging product that provides energy efficiency, long product life, and improved lighting quality and control. However, initial cost for installing LED light is significantly higher than conventional fluorescent lighting. In addition, there are some risks that the owners should be aware of:

- Efficiency – Although the lighting efficiencies of the latest LED products are already higher than the best fluorescent light, efficiency in LED technology has been improving by 5 to 15% per year. This fast pace development results in a market with products of diverse efficiency levels.
- Product life – Although LED elements have life expectancy of about 50,000 hours, - 15 years usable life for normal office schedules - failures in power supply and inadequate heat rejection design may result in shorter product lives.

- Uniformity - The LED market lacks standardization and uniformity. Most fixtures have integrated lamp packages that are not designed for easy replacement. In addition, without industry lamp standards, the LED lamp design 10 or 15 years in the future will likely be much different. As a result, at the end of the product's life the entire fixture may need to be replaced. This would void any economic benefit that a long product life could achieve.

The above risks can be mitigated by:

- Monitoring current development and future industry directions.
- Performing life cycle cost analysis to verify economic worth.
- Specification to ensure product quality and efficiency.

enVErgie is now a federally certified small business, MBE & DBE

Small businesses working on federal projects are required to register with the Small Business Administration (SBA). As of July 2012, self-certification is no longer valid. Having previously been certified as Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) & Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) by the Maryland DOT, enVErgie has now completed the reg-

istration process and is now officially certified as such at the federal level.

