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Merchandise Mart Pursuing LEED

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The largest commercial building in the world, the 4.2-million-square-foot Merchandise Mart in Chicago, will soon be submitted for LEED certification.

As owner of the building, Merchandise Mart Properties (MMP) already employs some green practices, such as recycling waste and using cleaning products with low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). MMP is now pursuing certification for the 77-year-old building through the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED for Existing Buildings rating system.

To achieve certification, MMP plans to adopt a purchasing policy emphasizing products with recycled and low-VOC content, update its construction standards to include green practices, increase the energy efficiency of equipment throughout the building, and implement green guidelines for events held in the building, among other strategies. MMP will also work with its tenants who wish to achieve certification in the LEED for Commercial Interiors rating system.

MMP began documenting its compliance with LEED standards in July 2006 and hopes to achieve certification by November 2007, conceivably timed to coincide with Chicago's hosting of the USGBC's Greenbuild conference the same month.

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