

## Green building programs bloom across U.S.

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The American Institute of Architects says an increasing number of municipalities are offering incentives to go green. And, according to the U.S. Green Building Council, more organizations such as architects and nonprofits are joining its group.

Some data also show a rise in the number of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified buildings in the nation and at home.

A study by the National Association of Home Builders and McGraw-Hill Construction showed 2 percent of the commercial and residential construction market was green in 2006.

The study projected that in 2010 the number of green buildings could encompass up to 10 percent of the market.

In addition to Salem-area buildings earning green marks, several in Portland are doing so, as well. There, Fred Meyer is constructing a green store, said Gina Franzosa of the Portland-based Cascadia Region Green Building Council.

Other LEED-certified Portland businesses include: Wells Fargo, Mint Dental Works and REI.

"The number of (projects with) LEED certifications, it's growing exponentially, about 100 percent a year," Franzosa said.

Part of the reason for that growth is more companies promoting eco-consciousness and more green building programs, which are laws or regulations that offer incentives for raising public, residential or commercial structures.

From 2003 to November 2007, the number of cities in the U.S. with green building programs in place rose from 22 to 92 out of 661 communities studied, an increase of 418 percent, according to a study by the American Institute of Architects.

Oregon has two green building programs in Portland and in Eugene. In 2006, 31 Oregon companies such as architectural firms and nonprofits joined the Green Building Council, and in 2007, 91 companies joined.

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