

Topic:	Green Buildings & Energy Efficiency
Resource Type:	Regulations
State:	New York
Jurisdiction Type:	Municipal
Municipality:	County of Rockland
Year (adopted, written, etc.):	Unknown
Community Type - applicable to:	Urban; Suburban
Title:	County of Rockland Green Building Standards
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Abstract

Rockland County, New York, is a suburban county on the coast of the Hudson River, located about 12 miles north of New York City. Rockland is one of 24 municipalities in New York State to be designated as a Preserve America Community under the federal government's Preserve America Program which is administered by the National Park Service and allocates federal grant money in order to preserve the country's natural, historic, and cultural resources. Rockland has many lakes, wetlands, and designated park areas, and the county is promoting green initiatives in order to preserve the rich scenic environment in which it is situated.

Rockland County's ordinance is grounded in environmental, public health, and fiscal considerations. The County realizes the importance of preserving the environment through energy conservation and use of renewable resources, as well as the opportunity to save money spent on energy costs when buildings are designed more efficiently. Additionally, there are benefits to the public health when both indoor and outdoor air quality is improved through the use of Green Building techniques. The ordinance applies only to government buildings and facilities, and it mandates that all "major facility projects" (and project with a total cost of \$1 million or more) must be designed and constructed to meet a minimum LEED Silver standard. Construction can continue to completion without getting official certification from the USGBC, but there is a "good faith" standard applied to all developers that they will meet the requirements for certification. However, the County Legislature does have the power to waive the requirements of this law if it determines that the benefits of a particular project will outweigh the need for strict adherence to the statute, so long as the project made a good faith attempt to at least substantially comply with the law.

Resource

CODE OF ORDINANCES – ROCKLAND COUNTY, NEW YORK
Chapter 220 – Building Construction

ARTICLE II. GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS
§ 220-4 to § 220-8

§ 220-4. Title.

This article shall be known as "The Rockland County Governmental Green Building Act."

§ 220-5. Findings and purpose.

The Rockland County Legislature finds that:

A. It is Rockland County government's policy to be good stewards of the environment and to finance, plan, design, construct, manage, renovate and maintain its facilities and buildings to be sustainable.

B. It is also a fact that, given the state of global nonrenewable energy supply, energy costs for all sectors of the economy, including that portion used to supply public buildings, are skyrocketing and will likely continue to increase.

C. Energy use by public buildings may contribute to the problems of pollution and global climate change, but, if properly managed, can reduce these costs, both fiscally and environmentally.

D. Public buildings can be built and renovated using high-performance methods for construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance and renewable and clean energy technologies that save energy costs, decrease pollutant discharge from buildings to preserve the environment, and make workers and students safer and more productive by improving indoor and outdoor air quality.

E. Government at all levels should respond to global energy concerns by doing whatever it can to both reduce its own reliance on costly and environmentally unfriendly energy sources and by setting an example for others to follow. This will improve public awareness of these new technologies to improve the quality of life for all building occupants and the larger environment in Rockland County and beyond.

F. By leading the way in publicizing and utilizing green building technologies, Rockland County government will set an example for others in the County, whether governmental, commercial or residential, to emulate on their projects.

§ 220-6. Definitions.

As used in this article, the following words shall have the following meanings:

LEED SILVER STANDARD: The United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building rating standard referred to as "silver standard."

MAJOR FACILITY PROJECT: A project where, in calculating the cost, the appropriate County department determines that, including all reasonably calculable costs, from the design and construction phases, including architectural and engineering costs, the total project cost would amount to at least \$1,000,000.

ROCKLAND COUNTY: Every County office, board, commission, committee, bureau, department or public institution of higher education.

§ 220-7. Green building standards.

All major facility projects of Rockland County shall be designed and constructed, acting in good faith, to at least meet the LEED silver standard. Before, during and after construction of such major facility projects of Rockland County, the County shall submit the appropriate documentation, at the appropriate times, to the U.S. Green Building Council seeking LEED silver standard certification. This provision applies to major facility projects that have not entered the design phase prior to July 31, 2008.

§ 220-8. Waiver of requirements.

Upon the recommendation of the Rockland County Executive, the Rockland County Legislature may, via resolution, waive the requirements of this article. The Rockland County Executive shall base the waiver recommendation upon a certification that, in his or her opinion, the benefits of waiving this article's requirements outweigh the environmental benefits to the residents of Rockland County, such as where the County, acting in good faith, is in substantial compliance with this article. A detailed report, outlining the relative benefits of waiver and nonwaiver, shall accompany the recommendation.

Severability.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this local law or the application thereof to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity or circumstance shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, effect or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this law or in its application to the person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such order or judgment shall be rendered.

Effective date.

This local law shall become effective immediately upon the filing of this local law in the office of the New York secretary of state pursuant to section 27