

## Eighty-year-old building gets LEED renovation

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In the 1920s, the Fitzgibbon Glass Co. moved into a brand new building in Northwest Portland.

A number of other tenants used the 30,000-square-foot warehouse at the corner of Northwest 19th Avenue and Vaughan Street over the ensuing years, and now the old concrete structure has undergone a thorough renovation using modern specifications for a gold certification in the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program.

For Vancouver-based general contractor Robertson & Olson Construction, this was the company's initial foray into a formal green building process.

"This was our first LEED project, and I can say that it was a resounding success," said project manager Travis Henry. "We learned a lot, and everyone involved is very pleased. We even won a Best of 2007 Green Industrial Building Award from Northwest Construction for the project."

Involvement is the main reason Henry cites for the success of the renovation.

"The owner, architect and our company worked very closely together and communicated well during the construction," Henry said. "It was that collaboration that made the partnership work."

One example of how the project team members worked together: When several large chunks of rebar infested concrete were found during excavation of the adjacent parking lot, Ben King, Stem Architecture's designer of the building, proposed some of them be used as design elements in bioswales around the job site.

"Using the chunks rather than hauling them off to a dump made sense, and now they are a part of the site plan," Henry said. "They really look good."

Russ Klennert, chief estimator with Robertson & Olson, is also pleased with the outcome of the Fitzgibbon building.

"We have learned from the LEED process and are sure that our experience will open more doors for our company," he said. "We have had more and more clients, owners and developers ask about green building techniques and practices. Now we have the expertise."

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“Sustainable building is challenging the industry’s conceptions of how to design and build structures,” Henry added. “Each of us personally, and the construction industry as a whole, has to realize that we all can have a positive impact on how we use our resources.”