

# LEED Certification & The Benefits Of Interior Plants

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Thank you for this opportunity to educate you on the benefits of Interior Plants and their proper, sustainable maintenance and care. We appreciate your goal or interest in LEED certified buildings. As a current service provider for five LEED certified buildings, we hope to introduce you to some innovative ideas for sustainable and beneficial plant care.

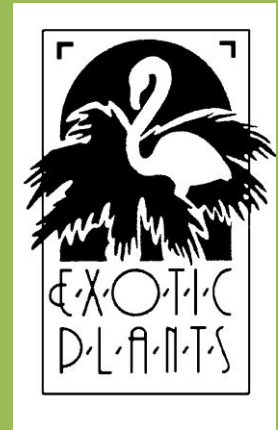
## Current Client References:

CalPers  
c/o Colliers International  
Contact: Jennifer Moore  
400 "Q" Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: 916-795-3600  
(LEED GOLD BLDG.)

Lionakis Beaumont Design Group  
Contact: Karen Blaise  
1919 20<sup>th</sup> St.  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: 916-558-1900  
(LEED CERT. BLDG.)



Established 1972, Exotic Plants has grown to become one of the premier providers of interior plant care, specializing in all natural organic plant care for more than 35 years. We will care for your plants on a weekly basis. Your beautiful plant will be watered, trimmed, cleaned, dusted and fertilized each week by our talented and caring staff. Plants are fed every month with an all natural fertilizer called Shur-Crop™. Shur-Crop is our exclusive and entirely natural plant food made from 100% sea kelp & live enzymes. It provides a perfect balance of all natural nutrients for most interior plants. When plants are attacked by common pests or gnats, we use soap-based products by Safer™. This is an OMRI listed product and is compliant for use in organic gardening. OMRI is the Organic Material Review Institute of America. This formula removes a wide variety of insects with the least amount of harm to your interior environment. These simple steps ensure that you, your plants and environment are well cared for NATURALLY!

**Exotic Plants is a Certified City of  
Sacramento Small Business.  
(Certification # 1267)**

### **LEED Innovations:**

Live plants in your potentially LEED certified building, cared for by Exotic Plants should warrant LEED points. Live plants are scientifically proven to:

- Eliminate volatile compounds in the air, such as formaldehyde, benzene, and carbon monoxide. Please see our own Exotic Plants white paper attached.
- Absorb noise pollution in traffic areas and call centers and add to beneficial views.
- Reduce stress levels in employees, boost morale, build contentment, & promote productivity.
- Increase HVAC efficiency with their natural cooling abilities.
- Aid healthy humidity levels in the work place.

### **Alternative Ideas:**

As a current plant provider in five LEED Certified buildings in Sacramento we have many alternative approaches and suggestions for your interior plant maintenance:

- Your Class A level plants should be sourced from local growers within the state of California. This may change a small amount of your specified plants, but would add to the sustainability of the final project and ongoing service.
- We would encourage the use of our easily attained recycled paper as a collar in your decorative containers. Most foam is currently manufactured in a process that produces a tremendous amount of waste and requires heavy amounts of toxic or harsh environmental materials and is not biodegradable.
- With that noted, you should be aware that to optimize the air cleaning benefits of interior plants there are two biological systems happening. Foam collars would block this system's cleaning effect. 50% of your air is cleaned through the circular air system that occurs at the root or dirt/pot level of the plant. The other 50% is the photosynthesis occurring at the leaf level. Paper products are loose enough to promote this air cleaning benefit of the plant, foam is not.
- We commend your choice of Spanish moss as a decorative cover to the pots. It is easily grown; non-color treated, and promotes air circulation to the pot level of the plant.

- For added LEED points or ultimate air cleaning benefits, an interior plant is recommended for every 100 sq. feet of occupied office space. You might want to commit to additional plants in the future.
- Plants will be cleaned, dusted and polished with organic, OMRI approved products.
- Plants will be fertilized as needed with our proprietary and organic product, Shur-Crop product.
- Our guaranteed maintenance policy will ensure your plants are replaced as soon as they appear to need it. And because of our commitment to sustainable practices, will be replaced by local growers within Northern California only.
- We also actively reduce plant waste by rejuvenating plants at our 3000 sq. ft greenhouse, unlike most plant care companies.

We hope that these alternative suggestions differentiate us from your many interior plant providers. Though we cannot guarantee LEED points from these suggestions, we feel that environmental and sustainable benefits would result from these changes and would contribute to your LEED certification goals.

We appreciate your consideration of our company and are very excited about the impact interior plants and care by Exotic Plants can have on a LEED project.

Please do not hesitate to call us with any questions, needs for more information, or would like a personal presentation of the proposed concepts in this article.

Sincerely,

Kifumi H. Keppler

Owner/President

Exotic Plants, Ltd.

## ADDITIONAL COMPANY INFORMATION:

### **Environmental Sustainability**

We enjoy working to reduce the environmental impact of our business dealings and operations. To that end, here is a large sampling of the practices and policies our company currently has in place.

#### **Practices and Policies:**

- Green Building Efforts: Our business is located on a bus route, we actively use skylights and solar tubes to provide light for our plants, our exterior walls and roof are white for energy conservation, and windows are tinted for energy conservation and plant preservation, all computers and office machines are energy star appliances with power save features.
- Solid Waste Reduction Efforts: We re-use almost all transportation and packaging materials from our vendors, we use mostly local and all California growers to reduce transportation costs and environmental impact, we centralize purchasing, recycle and re-use almost all office paper, encourage employees to use reusable containers, limit the use of disposable paper products and use cloths for our plant care (which are wash and re-used). Encourage phone and electronic communication for almost all business communication to reduce paper usage.
- Pollution Prevention: We encourage and design employee carpooling for our employees and their plant care routes. Strongly limit hazardous product usage in our office and use all organic, all natural and non-toxic plant care products. Offer flex-schedules to our employees to reduce commuting efforts and publicize/provide many recycle opportunities to our employees and customers.

#### **Results:**

Because of these environmental sustainability efforts our company has seen a large decrease in our energy consumption and product consumption in the past few years. It gives us great company pride to support green earth efforts.