



GREEN ADVANTAGE

AUI is helping building owners reach their LEED certification goals.

WINDS OF CHANGE


AUI recently completed two wind farms in north Texas



GREEN FLEET!

Matthew Wylie, AUI's Resident Green Guru has a Bright Idea






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WINDS OF CHANGE

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AUI recently completed two wind farms in north Texas: the Wolf Ridge Wind Farm can produce more than 120 MW of energy, with its 75 turbines, each one capable of producing 1.5 MW; and the Barton Chapel Wind Farm, with 60 turbines, can produce 120 MW of energy. Wind turbines can help alleviate the damage caused by global warming. According to the AWEA, a single one-MW turbine displaces 1,800 tons of carbon dioxide.

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As you probably noticed from the change in AUI Construction News' typically red cover, we are thinking **GREEN!** We thought it was only appropriate to trade in our signature color (temporarily) for the earth-friendly hue considering all of the changes AUI Contractors, Inc., has undergone in the past year.

A new attitude has taken over our headquarters — one that has made this environmentally aware company even more passionate — and cautious — of our impact on the planet. Just this year, 16 of our employees earned Green Advantage certification. Green Advantage (GA) is an environmental certification for building-related practitioners, primarily contractors, subcontractors, and tradespeople.

We realize small things can make a big difference, like making sure to turn out the lights each time we leave a room, turning off and unplugging electronics at the end of the day, and opening the window shades to let in natural light. But then big things can make a big difference, too. AUI completed two wind energy projects in Texas: the Wolf Ridge and Barton Chapel wind farms. It is truly exciting to be part of projects that are considered to be the way of the future.

All of these initiatives have reenergized our views on green building practices. This enthusiasm has more AUI employees lining up to earn GA certification and has given us new drive in our pursuit of projects to expand the alternative energy and renewable resource markets.

We know that this issue — our first issue of *AUI Construction News* completely dedicated to green initiatives — will not only inform you of the changes taking place at AUI, but our hope for this issue is that it will inspire you to be a little more aware of your own environmental impact.

Providing superior services with an exceptional team,

Doug Alumbaugh, President



Glenn Strother, Vice President



The Green Advantage

Team member certification helps owners achieve LEED rating.

By Joanne Costin



Driven by lower lifetime operating costs, as well as the marketing benefits of going “green,” building owners are pursuing green construction in record numbers. According to the McGraw-Hill Construction *Green Building SmartMarket Report*, approximately 10 percent of commercial construction starts are expected to be green by 2010. This growing need has construction managers preparing to change with the times through training and certification.

Programs such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), administered by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), provide independent, third-party verification that a building meets the highest green building and performance measures. Through the LEED Green Building Rating System, building owners and operators can measure a building’s design and performance in its efforts to be environmentally responsible.

Four progressive levels of LEED certification — Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum — are achieved based on the number of points awarded to a building project. Points are awarded based on performance in six categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere; materials and resources, indoor environmental quality; innovation and design process. To earn the Certified designation, new

construction projects must be awarded a minimum of 26 points, while Platinum certification requires a minimum of 52 points out of a possible 69 points.

AUI Takes the LEED

Owners are pursuing LEED-certified buildings not only for the savings in energy efficiency, but also for greater productivity and health benefits. In addition, many companies have successfully marketed their green efforts to build loyalty among customers and employees.

When it comes to helping building owners earn LEED certification, AUI Contractors, Inc., is leading the way in north Texas. Since January, AUI team members have been earning Green Advantage certification. Green Advantage (GA) is an environmental certification for building-related practitioners, primarily contractors, subcontractors, and tradespeople.

Unlike the LEED professional accreditation offered by the USGBC, GA focuses specifically on the construction aspects of LEED certification, rather than on the design aspects. About two-thirds of LEED points are design-based, while one-third are construction-based. A LEED Innovation credit can be earned if 30 percent of a project’s construction decision-makers are GA-certified prior to the start of construction. Decision-makers typically consist of project managers, superintendents, foremen, estimators, and preconstruction

site personnel for both the general contractor and subcontractors. Another Innovation credit can be earned by having at least one project team member with a LEED Accredited Professional (AP) designation. The Green Advantage program is designed as an alternative and non-competitive certification for construction professionals.

GA certification requires passing a 90-minute, 60-question exam demonstrating knowledge of current green building principles, materials, and techniques. To prepare for the exam, AUI employees participated in eight hours of GA training.

“LEED points require an integrated team effort,” said Michael Kaweck, Green Advantage trainer and Director of Sustainability for Axiom Sustainability Consulting, “but most of the points either lean heavily toward design or toward construction, in terms of implementation. The GA test focuses on the points that are construction-based: quality assurance, quality control — things that contractors are actually going to be doing in the field.”

The driving force behind AUI’s participation in GA is Matthew Wylie, Director of Commercial Construction for AUI. His passion for green building led him to discover



the GA program. Wylie was so impressed, he coordinated in-house training for AUI employees, a program that was fully supported by top management.

Through the GA program, AUI has become more knowledgeable about LEED requirements. "There were a lot of things that at first seemed very difficult, or were hard to get our arms around," Wylie said. "But after they were explained, it became a much more doable, reachable goal and less of a confusing, difficult, expensive unknown."

Wylie believes that when contractors bid LEED projects without fully knowing the requirements, they are setting themselves up to disappoint their clients or lose money. For example, one area where contractors have control of LEED points is in waste diversion. To earn one LEED point, builders must be able to document diversion of 50 percent of overall construction waste from landfills. Diversion of 75 percent of construction waste earns an additional point. Through GA training, contractors learn how to break that requirement down for each material on the job site, a task that requires a team approach and lots of communication. For example, a project may require 100 percent of concrete to be recycled and a lower percentage of other materials to hit an overall target of 50 percent.

Opening (Green) Doors

The Dallas-Fort Worth area is experiencing exponential growth in LEED registrations. According to Kawecki, about 250 projects are currently in some stage of LEED registration, up from just a few buildings a few years ago.

Wylie believes the GA program will help AUI land more work on LEED-certified buildings. "It gives owners a sense of confidence that we have a competency in this area," Wylie said.

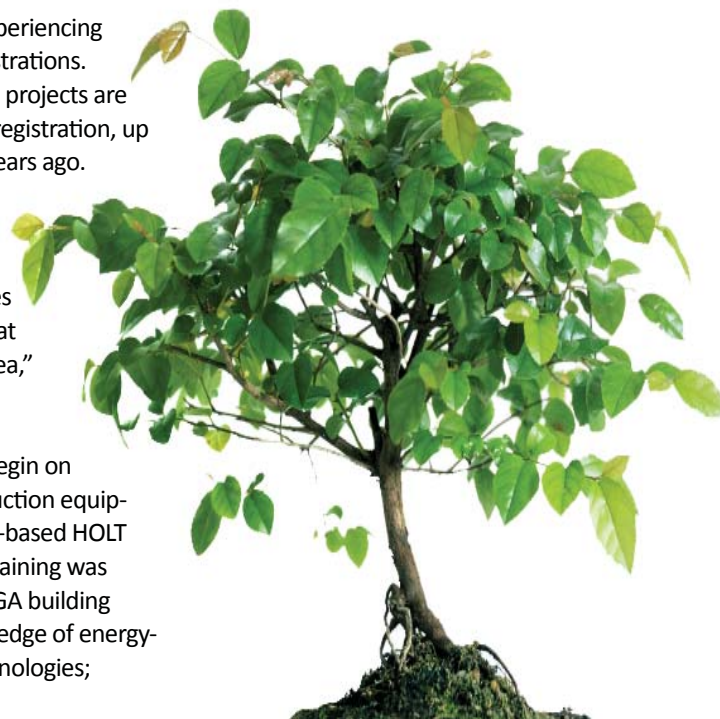
In December, construction will begin on AUI's first LEED project, a construction equipment dealership for San Antonio-based HOLT CAT. Wylie is confident the GA training was instrumental in landing the job. GA building practitioners have proven knowledge of energy- and water-efficient building technologies;

sustainable construction techniques that enhance disaster resistance; construction methods that improve air quality and the health of building occupants; land planning and development; and land management practices that protect wildlife habitats, soil, and water. The GA training enabled AUI to educate HOLT CAT about the LEED points that are most attainable, as well as the costs involved.

AUI has more GA-certified employees than any other company in Fort Worth. Nationwide, approximately 2,000 professionals have been GA certified since late 2004.

And while far more professionals (43,000) hold the LEED AP designation, GA certifications may eventually surpass the number of LEED professionals. The reason for this is GA certifications expand the knowledge of green building among contractors as well as provide another opportunity to earn a LEED point. To ensure AUI meets the 30 percent requirement on the HOLT CAT project, it will hold mandatory training sessions for its subcontractors.

Through GA certification, AUI has stepped up to help owners reach their LEED certification goals. "I commend AUI for putting such a focus on the training," Kawecki said. And with a fast-growing green building market, AUI is willing to rethink its methods and practices to provide its clients the green advantage. **AUI**



"When it comes to helping building owners earn LEED certification, AUI Contractors is leading the way in north Texas."

— Matthew Wylie,
Director of Commercial Construction



GA Certified Team —

- Doug Alumbaugh**, Managing Partner
- Kelly Black**, Commercial General Superintendent
- Jerry Burk**, Project Manager
- Mario Carbone**, Director of Construction Services
- Mitch Chappell**, Director of Civil Construction
- Jennifer Clay**, Project Manager
- Ryley Dent**, Project Engineer
- Chris Hall**, Project Engineer
- Christie Hons**, Project Engineer
- Sean Heard**, Intern
- Jeremy Hogan**, Commercial Estimating Manager
- Tony Rader**, Director of Sales & Marketing
- Blake Taylor**, Superintendent
- AJ Thomas**, Superintendent
- Earl Wright**, Scheduler
- Matthew Wylie**, Director of Commercial Construction

Winds of Change

Two wind farm projects take AUI to the next level in an emerging market.

Forget images of Don Quixote jousting at windmills; these days wind is sexy. It's clean energy, using almost no water and causing little environmental damage. Texas, more commonly known for oil, is a hotbed of wind development, in part because the state government views it so favorably. Compare wind to oil, or natural gas; both use a lot of water in cooling and power generation, and wind wins — it uses less than one gallon per megawatt (MW) hour produced. It's a renewable source of energy that's good for drought-inclined plains; it's also environmentally friendly.

How Turbines Work

The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), which, among other things, helps provide low-cost utilities to Central Texas, explains on its website (LCRA.org) how wind is used to create energy: "The blades—or rotors—of a wind turbine are similar to airplane blades. Strong, steady winds cause the blades, some as long as 130 feet, to rotate a turbine. The rotating motion of magnets in the turbine causes an electric field that can generate a flow of electrical current." It takes a number of turbines to produce enough energy to power a city, so often there are multiple turbines in a wind farm. Essentially, the wind blows, the turbines turn, and voilà, energy. No drilling; no mining; no stripping.

Why Wind?

As gas prices skyrocket and companies work to erase their carbon footprints, wind energy can be fascinating: It's clean and renewable. According to some

experts, if harnessed, U.S. wind could generate more electricity than all the oil in Saudi Arabia. And wind—unlike oil—wouldn't be depleted.

Clearly, businesses are taking notice. In 2007, wind energy accounted for 35% of all new U.S. electricity generating capacity, and 2008 is expected to be another year of tremendous wind energy growth. According to some estimates, wind could produce twice the energy the U.S. consumes. Right now, however, only 1% of U.S. energy is generated by wind, with the potential for tremendous growth.

More importantly, wind turbines can help alleviate the damage caused by global warming. According to the AWEA, a single one-MW turbine displaces 1,800 tons of carbon dioxide.

Where the Wind is

In 2007, Texas surpassed California as the state with the greatest capacity for wind energy — and has a goal of generating 10,000 MW of power by 2025. According to the West Texas Wind Energy Consortium, West Texas alone supplies more than 25% of total U.S. wind production.

That's partly because the state government is creating wind-favorable policy. The Texas Public Utilities Commission (PUC) created the Competitive Renewable Energy Zones, which helps the transmission of wind energy from wind-rich, less densely populated areas to wind-poor populated areas — one of the biggest challenges in developing a profitable wind farm. In July of 2008, more than \$4 billion was

approved to create transmission lines to carry energy from the wind farms to the larger cities (Dallas/Ft. Worth), which have greater power demands. The routes generally run from west Texas and the Panhandle to densely populated central areas like Dallas/Ft. Worth.

According to Terry Hadley of the PUC, those new lines could be operational as early as 2013 and will carry, at maximum, 18,000 MW. Given that the PUC estimates that one MW can power 400 homes at peak demand, 18,000 MW can power over 7 million homes. New transfer lines and the state's commitment to renewable energy make Texas attractive to wind "farmers". Many times, their main concern is just that—deciding how to get the wind energy from the rural wind farms to energy-consuming urban centers.

Wind Popularity and Success

"Wind power has recently become a headline industry," says Mario Carbone, Director of Construction Services for AUI. "The growth over the past few years has been incredible. AUI is a very diverse company, and has always been open to pursuing new market segments. Our first opportunity in wind came from a referral for the Barton Chapel project, and now we are working on our sixth contract in this exciting industry."

Three things are necessary for a viable wind farm. First, the location needs to have good wind; second, the farm needs to be close to power transmission lines; and third, the landowners involved need to be

willing to participate in the project. Both Muenster and Graham, Texas, met all three requirements.

AUI Contractors recently completed two new wind farms: Wolf Ridge (in Muenster, not far from the Oklahoma border) and Barton Chapel (in Graham, west of Fort Worth).



Wolf Ridge can produce more than 120 MW of energy, with its 75 turbines, each one capable of producing 1.5 MW. AUI Contractors completed the civil operations for the project in only six months. Barton Chapel was a two-phased project that began on February 1, 2007 and was completed on May 15, 2008. It consisted of 5,967,572 square feet on 137 acres, and 60 turbines. The project included the construction of 20 miles of gravel access roads, 60 crane pads, and concrete foundations.

Kent Smith, AUI Project Manager, notes that the Barton Chapel project was tough because it “included over 20 miles of roadway over varied terrain [without] phone reception and different portions of the project were on separate plateaus.” However, he also says, “good team communication was the key to overcoming these obstacles, and in this case the team included all of the on-site contractors, suppliers, Gamesa, GES, the landowners, and of course the entire AUI team.”

AUI is pleased with the success of both projects. Josh Goynne, AUI Project Manager at Wolf Ridge, says that wind energy is great not only from an environmental point of view – “It’s probably the cleanest form of energy that we know about at this time,” – but also from a construction one: “From a construction standpoint, it’s quick, easy, and efficient for us to build these wind farms.” AUI completed all excavation, concrete, backfill, and crane pads for Wolf Ridge. Even despite a very tight schedule, AUI met its deadlines with no quality issues.

Carbone is also proud of AUI’s “speed, quality, safety, and overall performance on our wind projects,” he says, adding, “These results have led to new opportunities and some very strong relationships in a close-knit wind fraternity. Our Wolf Ridge project came as a result of a referral from the structural engineer on Barton Chapel – that speaks volumes about the quality of the work that our guys did out there.”

Alleviating Concerns

Some people have expressed concern about the potential impact of windmills on birds. Laurie Jodziewicz of the American Wind Energy Association explains that the concern stems largely from one of the first commercial US wind projects some years ago – Altamont Pass. “That project has had higher numbers of bird deaths than we’ve seen in other places,” she says. “Thankfully, [Altamont Pass] has really been an anomaly,” she says, adding that bird death is something that’s looked at in every project.

Indeed that was one of the concerns that AUI took into consideration when building; a number of trees had to be cleared in order to build roads and turbines. “The schedule for clearing of trees was phased around the birds’ nesting periods, and every effort was made to reduce the clearing limits. All disturbed areas were restored and revegetated,” says Carbone.

Looking Forward

The U.S. Department of Energy recently prepared a report about wind energy called “20% Wind Energy by 2030.” The report looks at what would happen if wind energy comprised 20% of all energy by 2030 and found that from 2020 - 2030, the U.S. wind industry could do the following, among other things:

- “[S]upport roughly 500,000 jobs in the U.S., with an annual average of more than 150,000 workers directly employed by the wind industry;
- “[S]upport more than 100,000 jobs in associated industries (e.g., accountants, lawyers, steel workers, and electrical manufacturing);
- “[S]upport more than 200,000 jobs through economic expansion based on local spending;
- “[I]ncrease annual property tax revenues to more than \$1.5 billion by 2030; and
- “[I]ncrease annual payments to rural landowners to more than \$600 million in 2030.”

Even more notably, according to the DOE, “the 20% Wind Scenario could reduce CO2 emissions in 2030 by 825 million metric tons – 25% of the CO2 emissions from the nation’s electric sector in the no-new-wind scenario.”

Eight hundred twenty-five million metric tons is a lot by any standard. Even in Texas. And it’s a much better number than \$4 per gallon. **AUI**



“Wind power has recently become a headline industry ... The growth over the past few years has been incredible.”

— Mario Carbone, AUI Director of Construction Services



Photos —

Opposite page: Wolf Ridge Wind Farm; A wind turbine’s blade spins to create electricity. The rotating motion of magnets in the turbine causes an electric field that can generate a flow of electrical current.” -- LCRA.org

This page, clockwise: Barton Chapel Wind Farm; looking onto phase I from a local field. Barton Chapel Wind Farm; an almost humorous comparison of size between a home and a wind turbine.

This page, above: Barton Chapel Wind Farm; a close-up of Phase II.

GREEN FLEET



Matt Wylie, AUI's resident Green Guru (and Director of Commercial Construction) puts his Green Skills to good use.

The construction business is awash in the Green building movement. As clients become more aware of the fact that Green building is a legitimate economic initiative, more are gravitating to what was previously viewed as a movement of tree-hugging philanthropy. Meanwhile, the public is bombarded with Green media, making Green buildings and Green business viable marketing strategies for organizations

For individuals, living Green is a lifestyle shift. Likewise, organizations must make a deliberate change in their culture to most effectively take advantage of their green opportunities.

Green Ideas

I spoke with a colleague recently about changes being implemented in their company and had one of those stunning "Why didn't I think of that first!" moments.

After a round of golf...um, networking, laced with much Green Building discussion, I was embarrassed as we dropped off my clubs at my big, bad, 5.7 liter Dodge Ram (yeah, it's got a Hemi), and then proceeded to his Toyota Camry Hybrid.

The colleague, a Vice President of a sizable local MEP subcontractor, went on to tell me how he's slowly replacing the existing fleet of Ford F-150 company trucks with 4-cylinder Toyota Tacomas. The efficiency difference between the trucks is approximately 6 mpg.

That may not sound like much, but based on current fuel prices and a yearly average of 25,000 miles per vehicle, that's approximately \$1,700 per year in fuel savings. Consider a fleet of 50 trucks, and you're talking about \$85,000 in fuel savings for one year.

The Right Ride

I couldn't help but take this one step further and consider my own situation. I'm a closet tree-hugger. My ego is not in any way tied to my mode of transportation.

Prior to developing a pretty nasty woodworking habit, I drove a VW Jetta and loved it...until I found out it would actually take flight if driven fast enough with a sheet of plywood strapped to the top. I've driven a truck ever since and have never been smart enough to come up with a way to get back in the Jetta.

AUI provides me with an auto allowance and a gas card. I started thinking, *Hmmmm... what if we kept one or two of those F-150s we're replacing and parked them at the office for common use? Then, what if we offered an incentive to employees with vehicle allowances to drive an efficient set of wheels?*

I immediately ran to the nearest spreadsheet and discovered that if I were to get myself a new Jetta TDI, for instance, ditch the Hemi, and drive my typical 25,000 miles per year, I'd be saving approximately \$3,500 per year based on current fuel prices, not to mention

the \$1,300 tax credit this car will garner next April. I was stunned.

Bringing it to the Company Level

As a company initiative, this is a no-brainer. To the extent that if an organization wants to perform an act of random kindness to our Earth, they could push the entire savings back to the employee. In the case shown above, that would mean an extra \$289 per month on my paycheck. If the organization was a little more prone to "share the wealth", even a 50/50 split would provide me with \$145 per month and more than enough incentive to go find my long lost Jetta. The company would be saving \$1,734 per year on my gas ticket.


Finally, imagine sharing this new company policy with a prospective client who is newly obsessed with Green Building. Imagine the weight that this simple concept would carry in a presentation to this client. Our marketing department is foaming at the mouth.

Like any other sustainable initiative, it's a win-win-win-win proposition. And I'd never be embarrassed by my Hemi again. **AUI**




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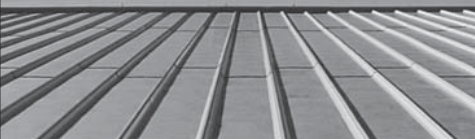
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