



USGBC

LEED-AP-Homes Exam

LEED AP Homes (Residential) Exam

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Question 1. (Single Select)

For a site in a town with a population of 10,000 to qualify under Location and Transportation Credit, Site Selection, Option 2: Infill Development, what portion of the site's perimeter must border previously disturbed land?

- A: 25%
- B: 50%
- C: 75%
- D: 100%

Correct Answer: C

Explanation:

The LEED for Homes Rating System (v4) outlines the requirements for the Location and Transportation (LT) Credit: Site Selection, which includes Option 2: Infill Development. This credit encourages development on sites that minimize environmental impact by utilizing previously disturbed or developed land. For a site to qualify as infill development, a specific portion of its perimeter must border land that has been previously disturbed.

According to the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction (v4), the requirement for Option 2: Infill Development is as follows:

Option 2. Infill Development (1 point)

Select a lot such that at least 75% of the perimeter of the project site immediately borders parcels that are previously developed or that have been graded or otherwise altered by direct human activities.

Source: LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, Location and Transportation Credit: Site Selection, p. 54.

This means that 75% of the site's perimeter must border previously disturbed land to meet the infill development criteria. The population of the town (10,000 in this case) does not directly affect the infill development requirement but may be relevant for other LT credits, such as Access to Quality Transit or Neighborhood Pattern and Design, which consider community size or density. However, for Site Selection, Option 2, the focus is solely on the perimeter bordering previously disturbed land.

The LEED v4.1 for Homes rating system aligns with this requirement, as it maintains the same infill development criteria for residential projects under the LT category:

LT Credit: Site Selection, Option 2. Infill Development

At least 75% of the project site's perimeter must border previously developed or disturbed parcels.

Source: LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, Credit Library, accessed via USGBC LEED Online.

The LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook confirms that the exam tests knowledge of the LEED v4 rating system, including the LT credits, and references the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction as a primary study resource. The handbook does not alter the technical requirements but emphasizes understanding credit intent and compliance paths, such as the infill development perimeter rule.

Why not the other options?

A . 25%: This is too low and does not meet the minimum threshold for infill development, which requires significant adjacency to previously disturbed land to ensure compact, sustainable development.

B . 50%: While closer, 50% still falls short of the 75% requirement, which is designed to prioritize sites fully integrated into existing developed areas.

D . 100%: Requiring 100% of the perimeter to border previously disturbed land is overly restrictive and not specified in the LEED v4 or v4.1 requirements.

References:

LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, USGBC, Location and Transportation Credit: Site Selection, p. 54.

LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, USGBC LEED Credit Library, accessed via LEED Online (<https://www.usgbc.org/credits>).

LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook, GBCI, October 2024, p. 12 (references study resources and exam scope based on LEED v4).

USGBC LEED for Homes Rating System (v4), available via USGBC website (<https://www.usgbc.org/resources/leed-homes-design-and-construction-v4>).

LEED v4.1 for Homes, USGBC, accessed via LEED Online, confirming alignment with v4 infill requirements.

Question 2. (Single Select)

A project team targets concrete as a material to receive Environmentally Preferable Products credit for fly ash content. Due to weather conditions, the structural engineer suggests reducing the fly ash content in a small portion of the suspended slab areas to speed the curing process and achieve the required strength. The adjusted calculation shows that reduced fly ash in these areas will result in failure to achieve the targeted point. Which of the following is the most effective strategy that the LEED AP could pursue?

A: Submit a CIR requesting the low fly ash suspended slab be removed from the calculations

B: Ignore the engineer's recommendation and proceed with the original design

C: Apply for a Regional Priority exemption since the local climate interfered with the project team's best effort to achieve the point

D: Demand the project team slow the construction schedule so additional curing time will allow the required amount of fly ash to be used

Correct Answer: B

Explanation:

The LEED for Homes Rating System (v4) awards points for the Materials and Resources (MR) Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products based on the use of materials with sustainable attributes, such as concrete with fly ash (a recycled material that reduces the environmental impact of cement production). The scenario indicates that reducing fly ash content in some suspended slab areas due to weather-related curing concerns would cause the project to fall short of the credit's threshold (e.g., 25%, 50%, or 90% by cost).

According to the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction (v4):

MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products (1–4 points)

Use products that meet one or more of the following criteria for at least 25%, 50%, or 90% (by cost) of the total materials in the project:

Recycled content: Materials with pre- or post-consumer recycled content, such as fly ash in concrete.

The percentage is calculated based on the total cost of qualifying materials across the project.

Source: LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, Materials and Resources Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, p. 160.

The LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C rating system confirms this:

MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products

Concrete with fly ash qualifies as an environmentally preferable product if it contributes to the required percentage of material cost. Project teams must ensure compliance across all relevant components.

Source: LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, Credit Library, accessed via USGBC LEED Online.

The most effective strategy is to ignore the engineer's recommendation and proceed with the original design (Option B). This ensures the project maintains the intended fly ash content to meet the credit threshold. Fly ash typically slows concrete curing, but modern mix designs and admixtures (e.g., accelerators) can mitigate weather-related delays without reducing fly ash content. The LEED AP should collaborate with the structural engineer to explore alternative solutions, such as adjusting the mix or using curing blankets, to maintain both structural integrity and credit compliance.

Why not the other options?

A . Submit a CIR requesting the low fly ash suspended slab be removed from the calculations: A Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR) is used to clarify LEED requirements or propose alternative compliance paths, but excluding specific components (e.g., the suspended slab) from calculations is not allowed, as the credit requires a project-wide material cost calculation. CIRs are also less common in LEED v4, as projects use

LEED Online inquiries.

C . Apply for a Regional Priority exemption since the local climate interfered with the project team's best effort to achieve the point: Regional Priority (RP) credits provide bonus points for addressing local environmental priorities, not exemptions for failing to meet credit requirements. Weather conditions do not justify an exemption for MR credits.

D . Demand the project team slow the construction schedule so additional curing time will allow the required amount of fly ash to be used: Slowing the construction schedule is impractical and costly, especially when alternative solutions (e.g., admixtures) can address curing time without compromising fly ash content. This option is less effective than maintaining the original design with adjustments.

The LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook emphasizes the need to understand MR credits and practical strategies for compliance, referencing the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction as a key resource. The exam is based on LEED v4, ensuring the relevance of maintaining fly ash content.

References:

LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, USGBC, Materials and Resources Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, p. 160–161.

LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, USGBC LEED Credit Library, accessed via LEED Online (<https://www.usgbc.org/credits>).

LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook, GBCI, October 2024, p. 12 (references study resources and exam scope based on LEED v4).

USGBC LEED for Homes Rating System (v4), available via USGBC website (<https://www.usgbc.org/resources/leed-homes-design-and-construction-v4>).

LEED v4.1 for Homes, USGBC, accessed via LEED Online, confirming fly ash criteria.

Question 3. (Single Select)

For a project to earn one point for Materials and Resources Credit, Environmentally Preferable Products, what must occur?

A: Achieve more than 95% of the component by weight or volume that meets Option 2: Environmentally Preferable Products

B: Meet more than two or more of the criteria under Option 2: Environmentally Preferable Products

C: Achieve more than 95% of the component by weight or volume that meets Option 1: Local Production

D: Meet both Option 1: Local Production and Option 2: Environmentally Preferable Products

Correct Answer: B

Explanation:

The LEED for Homes Rating System (v4) outlines the requirements for the Materials and Resources (MR) Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, which encourages the use of sustainable materials. The credit has two options: Option 1: Local Production (materials sourced within 100 miles) and Option 2: Environmentally Preferable Products (materials with attributes like recycled content, FSC-certified wood, or low emissions).

According to the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction (v4):

MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products (1–4 points)

Earn points by meeting the following:

Option 2: Environmentally Preferable Products: Use products that meet one or more of the following criteria for at least 25% (1 point), 50% (2 points), or 90% (3–4 points) by cost of the total materials:

Recycled content

FSC-certified wood

Bio-based materials

Low-emission products (e.g., low-VOC paints)

To earn 1 point, at least 25% of the materials (by cost) must meet two or more of these criteria.

Source: LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, Materials and Resources Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, p. 160–161.

The LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C rating system confirms:

MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products

For 1 point, use products that meet two or more environmentally preferable criteria (e.g., recycled content, FSC-certified) for at least 25% of the total material cost.

Source: LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, Credit Library, accessed via USGBC LEED Online.

To earn one point under Option 2, the project must use materials that collectively meet two or more of the environmentally preferable criteria (e.g., a product with both recycled content and low emissions) for at least 25% of the total material cost. This makes Option B the correct answer.

Why not the other options?

A . Achieve more than 95% of the component by weight or volume that meets Option 2: The credit is based on material cost, not weight or volume, and the threshold for one point is 25%, not 95%. Higher thresholds (e.g., 90%) are for additional points.

C . Achieve more than 95% of the component by weight or volume that meets Option 1: Local Production: Option 1 focuses on local production (within 100 miles), not environmentally preferable attributes, and uses cost, not weight or volume. It is a separate compliance path.

D . Meet both Option 1: Local Production and Option 2: Environmentally Preferable Products: The credit allows projects to pursue either Option 1 or Option 2 independently. Meeting both is not required for one point.

The LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook emphasizes MR credits, including Environmentally Preferable Products, and references the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction as a key resource. The exam is based on LEED v4, ensuring the relevance of Option 2's criteria.

References:

LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, USGBC, Materials and Resources Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, p. 160–161.

LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, USGBC LEED Credit Library, accessed via LEED Online (<https://www.usgbc.org/credits>).

LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook, GBCI, October 2024, p. 12 (references study resources and exam scope based on LEED v4).

USGBC LEED for Homes Rating System (v4), available via USGBC website (<https://www.usgbc.org/resources/leed-homes-design-and-construction-v4>).

LEED v4.1 for Homes, USGBC, accessed via LEED Online, confirming criteria for one point.

Question 4. (Single Select)

Energy simulation software used for ENERGY STAR Homes certification is approved by the:

- A: Department of Energy (DOE)
- B: U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)
- C: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- D: Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET)

Correct Answer: D

Explanation:

The LEED for Homes Rating System (v4) integrates ENERGY STAR Homes certification as part of the Energy and Atmosphere (EA) category, specifically for the EA Prerequisite: Minimum Energy Performance and EA Credit: Annual Energy Use. ENERGY STAR Homes certification requires energy simulation software to model the home's performance, and this software must be approved by a specific authority.

According to the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction (v4):

EA Prerequisite: Minimum Energy Performance

Projects pursuing ENERGY STAR for Homes certification must use energy simulation software accredited by the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) to demonstrate compliance with ENERGY STAR performance requirements.

Source: LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, Energy and Atmosphere

Prerequisite: Minimum Energy Performance, p. 112.

The Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) is the organization responsible for accrediting energy modeling software used for ENERGY STAR Homes certification, such as REM/Rate or Ekotrope. RESNET establishes standards for Home Energy Rating Systems (HERS) and ensures software accuracy for energy performance calculations.

The LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C rating system aligns with this:

EA Prerequisite: Energy Performance

ENERGY STAR Homes certification requires the use of RESNET-accredited energy modeling tools to verify performance targets, such as HERS index scores.

Source: LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, Credit Library, accessed via USGBC LEED Online.

While the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) oversees the ENERGY STAR program, it does not directly approve the simulation software; that responsibility lies with RESNET.

Why not the other options?

A . Department of Energy (DOE): The DOE supports energy efficiency programs but does not accredit software for ENERGY STAR Homes. It may be involved in broader standards (e.g., EnergyPlus), but RESNET handles ENERGY STAR software.

B . U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC): The USGBC administers LEED but does not approve ENERGY STAR software. It references ENERGY STAR requirements in LEED credits.

C . Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): The EPA manages ENERGY STAR but delegates software accreditation to RESNET for consistency in HERS ratings.

The LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook emphasizes EA prerequisites and credits, including ENERGY STAR integration, and references the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction as a key resource. The exam is based on LEED v4, ensuring the relevance of RESNET's role.

References:

LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, USGBC, Energy and Atmosphere

Prerequisite: Minimum Energy Performance, p. 112.

LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, USGBC LEED Credit Library, accessed via LEED Online

(<https://www.usgbc.org/credits>).

LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook, GBCI, October 2024, p. 12 (references study resources and exam scope based on LEED v4).

USGBC LEED for Homes Rating System (v4), available via USGBC website

(<https://www.usgbc.org/resources/leed-homes-design-and-construction-v4>).

RESNET Standards, accessed via www.resnet.us, confirming software accreditation.

Question 5. (Single Select)

A gut rehab LEED for Homes project will maintain the building's existing exterior wall and floor framing. Under Materials and Resources Credit, Environmentally Preferable Products category, these components get credit for being:

- A: Recycled
- B: Reclaimed
- C: Refurbished
- D: Restructured

Correct Answer: B

Explanation:

The LEED for Homes Rating System (v4) awards points for the Materials and Resources (MR) Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products for using materials with sustainable attributes, such as reused or salvaged materials. In a gut rehab project, maintaining existing exterior wall and floor framing qualifies these components as reused materials.

According to the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction (v4):

MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products (1–4 points)

Use products that meet one or more of the following criteria for at least 25%, 50%, or 90% (by cost) of the total materials:

Reused or salvaged materials: Materials that are reclaimed from the same or another project, such as existing framing maintained in a gut rehab.

In gut rehab projects, existing structural components (e.g., wall and floor framing) that are reused in place qualify as reclaimed materials.

Source: LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, Materials and Resources Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, p. 160.

The LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C rating system confirms:

MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products

Reclaimed materials, such as existing framing reused in gut rehab projects, contribute to the percentage of environmentally preferable products based on their cost.

Source: LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, Credit Library, accessed via USGBC LEED Online.

The term reclaimed (Option B) is used in LEED to describe materials that are reused or salvaged, such as existing framing kept in place during a gut rehab. This reduces the demand for new materials and aligns with the credit's intent.

Why not the other options?

A . Recycled: Recycled materials contain pre- or post-consumer recycled content (e.g., fly ash in concrete). Existing framing is not recycled but reused in its original form, so it does not qualify as recycled.

C . Refurbished: Refurbished materials are restored or repaired for reuse (e.g., refinished doors). Framing maintained in place is not refurbished but simply reused, so this term does not apply.

D . Restructured: This term is not used in LEED and does not describe the reuse of existing framing.

The LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook emphasizes MR credits, including Environmentally Preferable Products, and references the LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction as a key resource. The exam is based on LEED v4, ensuring the relevance of the term “reclaimed.”

References:

LEED Reference Guide for Homes Design and Construction, v4, USGBC, Materials and Resources Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products, p. 160.

LEED v4.1 Residential BD+C, USGBC LEED Credit Library, accessed via LEED Online (<https://www.usgbc.org/credits>).

LEED AP Homes Candidate Handbook, GBCI, October 2024, p. 12 (references study resources and exam scope based on LEED v4).

USGBC LEED for Homes Rating System (v4), available via USGBC website (<https://www.usgbc.org/resources/leed-homes-design-and-construction-v4>).

LEED v4.1 for Homes, USGBC, accessed via LEED Online, confirming reclaimed material criteria.

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