A KY EXCEL SPOTLIGHT

HAMPTON INN & SUITES-WATERFRONT

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Hampton Inn & Suites-Waterfront is an example of thoughtful planning and concern for the environment.

The lobby features LED lighting and flooring created from recycled materials.

Malcolm Bryant had a vision to build a hotel that was sustainable and would make the citizens of Owensboro and Kentucky proud. After much planning and work, Bryant's Hampton Inn & Suites-Waterfront opened on Jan. 31, 2014, on the banks of the Ohio River, near the Owensboro Convention Center and Smothers Park, which has fountains and a children's playground. The hotel is also close to many cultural attractions, such as Riverpark Center, International Bluegrass Music Museum and Museum of Science and History.

The Hampton Inn & Suites-Waterfront is unique because it is the first new construction LEED-certified hotel in Kentucky. LEED is the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. LEED-certified buildings utilize features that use less water and energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Building a hotel with 150 guest rooms, including 48 suites, is a huge undertaking. The hotel also has a restaurant, boutique, spa with a hair salon, indoor pool and whirlpool, fitness center, business center and meeting facilities. Incorporating LEED–certified features into a building that size requires planning and several consultations with USGBC officials. Construction costs are higher due to the certification process. In the long run, money is saved because many items in the structure are designed to conserve resources, which would lower utility costs.

"Sometimes you have to ignore the financial side and do what is right," Bryant says. "We have a green wall where our LEED plaque and a display listing the hotel's green features are located. Schools and other groups tour the hotel and are able to read about the hotel's sustainable features."

During the hotel's construction phase, waste products were recycled, beginning with asphalt that was removed from the site. Local products made with recycled materials were used as

Key to Success

Decide what you want to achieve and how to accomplish it before you begin a project.

much as possible. Certified sustainable wood was chosen for the front desk and other areas.

Sustainable energy-saving features of the hotel include an elevator that generates electricity as it descends and a geothermal heating and cooling system that was installed in the pilings, making Bryant's hotel the first in the U.S. to do so. Geothermal systems increase energy efficiency ratings by 400–500 percent, with a payback of 10–12 years. On the exterior, thinner brick and stone masonry were used, requiring less energy to produce. To save energy on heating water, laundry is washed in cold water, except for stained linens.

Another feature of the hotel is the indoor pool and whirlpool that are heated by solar power. The hotel joined KY EXCEL, Kentucky's voluntary environmental leadership program, and made the solar-heated pools its first KY EXCEL project. Bryant calculated that heating the pools with solar power will have a seven-year payback.

In the parking lot, the hotel encourages the use of electric vehicles by providing a charging station, free for guests to use, and special parking for low-emitting, fuel-efficient vehicles. Electric cars offer a significant reduction of local air pollution and help to eliminate tailpipe pollutants that contribute to greenhouse gas.

Low-emitting materials in sealants, paints, flooring and lighting were used in the hotel, as well as tiles and carpets made of recycled materials. Other features conserve water usage, such as low-flow toilets and sustainable plumbing fixtures.

The Hampton Inn & Suites-Waterfront continues its sustainability practices by purchasing recycled and green cleaning products. It also has a committee to focus on environmental issues, such as energy usage.

"Our hotel participates in the Clean the World Foundation, which is a program that recycles unused soap and shampoo products discarded by the hospitality industry daily," explains Bryant. "The items are distributed to homeless people in this country, as well as the poor in other nations. In this way, many deaths caused by hygiene-related illnesses can be prevented."

Several areas of the roof are covered with soil and plants, making it a green roof. Roofs such as this conserve energy and keep stormwater out of the drainage system. Drought-resistant and native plants that require no irrigation were used in the landscaping.

"I did my research about hotel design," Bryant says. "A LEED-certified building requires planning, so decide early if this is what you want. Talk to a USGBC reviewer."

Guests may use the electric vehicle charging station.

Native plants were used in the landscaping.