

# FacilityBlog from Today's Facility Manager: The First Facility Management Blog

📅 Wednesday, June 27, 2007

## How Much Do You Know About Green Roofs?



A recent study of facility managers found that many were well versed as to what a green roof was and what some of its benefits were. For instance, when asked what impact the vegetation on a green roof has on air quality, nearly 70% indicated that “it helps filter dust and dust particulates from the air,” which studies show is correct.

However, in other cases, the majority of their answers were simply not correct. Approximately 7% answered that they thought green roofs actually harmed indoor air quality. On the contrary, like most vegetation, the plants on a green roof absorb pollutants from the air and release oxygen.

Respondents were also asked what effect green roofs have on outdoor air temperatures. Seventeen percent said they have “little or no effect.” This is incorrect, studies show. Instead, one of the proven benefits of green roof systems is that they help reduce the “urban heat island” effect--the reason inner cities and large downtown areas are considerably warmer than outlying, forested areas.

Some of the other questions in the survey and their answers included these:

- Forty-one percent thought the most significant benefit of a green roof was energy savings. Although they do help “insulate” a facility, which does reduce energy costs, the key benefit of a green roof is their ability to reduce stormwater runoff.
- As to costs, more than 70% of the respondents were aware that a modular green roof, where plants are preplanted in modules that are placed atop the existing roof, tends to be less expensive than a built-in-place system constructed directly on the roof.
- Nearly 60% of the respondents believed a green roof increased the value of a property, whereas about 40% believed the technology is too new to affect property values. Green roofs are recognized as a property improvement and can increase property values.
- Similarly, only 30% believed a green roof increased the life cycle of the existing roof, while the other respondents believed it had little impact. In actuality, studies find that green roofs can double the life expectancy of the existing roof.
- Less than a third of the respondents knew that a green roof can contribute seven points or more toward LEED certification. Most of the other respondents believed it was five points or less or that it was not part of the LEED accreditation evaluation.

Finally, the facility managers were asked what U.S. city has the most green roofs installed. Most respondents were sure it was either Portland, OR, or Seattle, WA. However, the city with the most green roofs installed, by a fairly wide margin, is Chicago, IL. Chicago has two million square feet of green roofs installed, including one on its City Hall.

Labels: [Green Chicago](#), [Green Roofs](#), [GreenGrid](#), [The Environment](#)

posted by HeidiTFM at [10:20 AM](#) \_



1 Comments:



I read your article about "green roofs". Here are a couple of comments for you: Everything I've ever seen on these roofs originated with environmentally conscious sources. I'm sure its a great idea. Now tell me how you did it ! What kind of substrate did you put it on and what kind of load was it. How many failed because the substrate wouldn't hold up under the load ? The pictures I've seen tend to indicate concrete. What kind of grass did you plant ? How high did it grow and did you cut it ? How did running a vibrating machine on a roof top affect the building & occupants below. Did you just allow the water to build up or did you create some drainage ? How did you keep it from getting clogged with dead grass, cuttings, etc ? What were your maintenance costs for the roof ? Over how long a period ? If the growth died in the summer from lack of water did you have to replant ? Did the soils erode away ? How about insects on the roof. Heaven forbid you should have to water it, how does that make it green with high energy maintenance costs ? Certain raptor species love to (nest is too strong a word here) lay their eggs on the roofs. Its illegal to move the birds and to destroy the eggs. Do you have to inspect the roof before you cut the grass ? How much trouble do you have with roof leaks. They all do sooner or later, how much work and frustration went into finding them ? Grassy areas tend to hold water better than other roof types. How does that affect the load on the roof after a heavy rainfall ? How about during winter, what's the result of snow and ice buildup ? One final plug. You said 7% believed green roofs actually harmed indoor quality. Aside from energy use, a roof wont affect the indoor air quality until it leaks, when that happens put me with the 7%.

By Bruce, at [Fri Jun 29, 03:07:00 PM EDT](#) \_

[Post a Comment](#)



Links to this post:

[Create a Link](#)

[<< Home](#)



About  
FacilityBlog/TFM



FacilityBlog is where people discuss the demands faced by facility management professionals. Visitors are encouraged to comment; they can also LINK directly to anything of interest they find here. With daily updates, FacilityBlog is the most

widely read Blog about facility management. FacilityBlog began in May 2005.





[Subscribe to Today's Facility Manager Online Magazine](#)



you'd like even more facility management news delivered right to your desk, sign up for a free subscription to Today's Facility Manager magazine-- the ONLY news tabloid for facility product and service buyers. Click on the underlined text or the cover image of the magazine to find out if you qualify for a complimentary subscription.



## Contributors

-  [hero](#)
-  [TFM Show Bill](#)
-  [Jillian](#)
-  [HeidiTFM](#)
-  [AnneTFM](#)
-  [Mary Ellen](#)
-  [FM in SD](#)
-  [FMPro](#)
-  [jom](#)
-  [mjanowitz](#)





- FacilityBlog
- Today's Facility Manager
- Business Facilities
- The TFM Show
- World Wide Web



R|Mail

Facebook me!

BLOGTOPSITES

Top Blogs List



Bookmark This Site

[+Del.icio.us](#)

[+Furl It](#)

[+Spurl](#)

[+Tag!RawSugar](#)

[+Simpy This!](#)

[+Shadows Tag!](#)

[+Blink It](#)

[+My Web](#)





**Creative Commons License**

This

work is licensed under a [Creative Commons](#)

[Attribution-](#)

[NonCommercial-](#)

[NoDerivs 2.5 License.](#)

[Blog Flux Directory](#) 

**XMI**

 Add to **Google**

 **MY YAHOO!**

 Bloglines

 newsgator

 **MY MSN**

 **Bitty Browser**

 **MY AOL**

**Convert RSS to PDF**

 **Rojo** SUBSCRIBE

 **feedlounge**

**Rss fwd**

**Simplify!**

 **Technorati**

[Get RSS Buttons](#)



With more than 1,000 exclusive, facility management stories, FacilityBlog is the first--and only--daily Blog solely devoted to the subject of facility management. For more facility management news, visit [www.TodaysFacilityManager.com](http://www.TodaysFacilityManager.com).