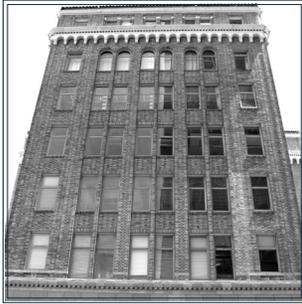


# EARTHJUSTICE'S

## GREEN HQ *Doing More with Less Earns LEED Silver Rating*



**For a decade** after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake shook Northern California, the historic Wakefield building in downtown Oakland sat damaged and vacant. Finally, a seismic retrofitting and restoration breathed new life into the 1920s high-rise office building. In 2002, when Earthjustice became the first tenants to occupy the restored building, they renovated their

four floors with a decidedly green twist.

Earthjustice (formerly Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund) is the nation's largest nonprofit environmental law firm. True to their mission of protecting the environment and public health, the organization aimed for a LEED Silver rating in the newly formed Commercial Interiors (CI) category. The 20,000-square-foot renovation, which was a pilot project for LEED-CI, exemplified a "doing more with less" approach. This meant leaving exposed concrete and brick walls unpainted, using salvaged wood for shelving and office partitions, and seeking high recycled content furniture, flooring and finishes.

By honoring the beauty and integrity of an existing building and minimizing environmental impacts, the Earthjustice office space earned one of the nation's first LEED Silver-CI ratings, and blazed the trail for future green renovation projects.

## ■ What Makes it Green ■

### SITE SELECTION

The Earthjustice headquarters and regional office occupies four floors of the Wakefield, an architecturally significant building in downtown Oakland. By choosing to locate in an existing downtown building, Earthjustice minimized its environmental footprint, reduced pressure to sprawl onto undeveloped land, and helped bring vitality to downtown. The location's excellent access to public transit reduces the need for employees to commute by car. The renovation added bicycle storage and changing rooms to the space, making it easier for people to bike to the office. "I appreciate the bicycle parking and a shower in our restored green building," says Earthjustice employee Brian Smith. "In the global warming era, those amenities should be required for all new office buildings, to help reduce motorized commuting."

### FAST FACTS

**LOCATION**

426 17th Street  
Oakland, California

**BUILDING TYPE**

Office building

**SIZE**

20,000 sq. ft.

**COST**

\$2.5 million

**COMPLETION DATE**

February 2002

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Earthjustice  
Oakland, CA

**ARCHITECT**

Metropolitan Architecture  
San Francisco, CA

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

West & East Bay Construction, Inc.  
Vacaville, CA

**CONTACT FOR MORE INFO**

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## MATERIALS & RESOURCES

Earthjustice's innovative efforts to use fewer resources are a stand-out feature of this project. The design team carefully assessed whether new materials were needed at all, and looked for ways to take advantage of the building's natural assets, such as exposed concrete walls, high ceilings and operable windows. "Working in an office environment where you are surrounded by natural sunlight and fresh air really reminds you of what you are working to protect," says Ray Wan, senior communications associate with Earthjustice.

- Concrete and brick walls are left exposed and unpainted; artful use of hanging fabric panels soften the look and reduce noise.
- High ceilings were left exposed, eliminating the need to construct drop ceilings.
- Walls used to separate spaces are made from recycled glass panels or sustainably harvested wood doors that roll, instead of permanent built-up walls.
- Some of the flooring is made from recycled automobile tires; carpeting is sisal, a rapidly renewable material that was installed without the use of toxic glues.
- Cabinetry is crafted from sustainably grown bamboo, a fast growing renewable resource.
- 50% of the construction and demolition materials were recycled; the office also has an active recycling program.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY & REDUCED CARBON FOOTPRINT

The Wakefield Building is blessed with many large, tall windows, of which Earthjustice took full advantage in order to provide appealing work spaces and save energy. The windows provide natural daylight to reduce use of electric lights, and occupancy sensors keep lights on only when rooms are occupied. Air conditioning is minimally used in conference rooms; operable windows and ceiling fans fulfill the majority of the cooling needs.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Earthjustice was the first tenant to occupy the newly restored building. Their renovation served as an example to the rest of the building's tenants of how practical and attractive green design can be. Some of those tenants incorporated various green practices into their own office designs. What's more, Earthjustice spreads the word about the benefits of green building by giving visitors information about and tours of their renovated workplace, and providing educational information about the project at environmental conferences and fairs.

## GREEN at a GLANCE

### SITE SELECTION

- Reuse of an existing historic building
- Close to public transit (BART and bus)
- Bicycle parking and changing rooms provided

### MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Salvaged Douglas fir lumber for shelving and partitions (Jefferson Recycled Woodworks)
- Bamboo tables and cabinets (Smith & Fong's Plyboo)
- Flooring made from recycled rubber tires (Dodge-Regupol's EcoSurface)
- Some carpeting contains recycled content (Constantine Commercial's Agave nylon loop)
- Drywall is 15% recycled-content gypsum board (Stockham Parker)
- Frosted glass panels made from 20% recycled glass cullet
- Conference room chairs designed to eliminate bulky foam padding (Herman Miller's Caper)

### ENERGY & CLIMATES CHANGE

- Automatic occupancy sensor light switches
- Daylight meets most lighting needs
- Operable windows and ceiling fans meet most cooling needs

### INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Raw concrete walls and brick walls left exposed and unpainted
- Zero-VOC interior latex paint (ICI Dulux's Lifemaster 2000)
- Sisal carpet, a rapidly renewable material, was tacked instead of glued (Floordesigns, Inc.)