

New monitoring system paves way for energy-efficient buildings

In order to promote energy-efficient buildings and infrastructures in the country, the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Building for Ecologically Responsive Design Excellence (BERDE) recently launched a new rating system that will monitor their environmental performance.

The BERDE Green Building Rating System (GBRS) is used to measure, verify, and monitor the environmental performance of buildings that exceeds existing mandatory regulations and standards. It is consensus-driven, and achieved through a multi-stakeholder consultation and collaboration process.

At present, there are twelve BERDE building projects that are registered under the Philippine Energy Efficiency Project-Efficient Building Initiative (PEEP-EBI) and 31 government buildings for efficient lighting certification.

“With the BERDE Green Building rating system in place, we now have the local counterpart for the Leadership in Energy and Environment design or LEED—the accepted benchmark in green building design in the United States of America. Really this green building rating system is a milestone in the domestic building sector because no green building standard existed here before,” DOE Undersecretary Loretta G. Ayson. “It is also very timely in the light of current construction boom in our country which is expected to last at least a few more years and the global trend of energy efficient and environment-friendly building designs.”

In the efficient lighting certification under PEEP-EBI, the recognized government buildings has the potential energy savings of 1,347 megawatt – hour, which is equivalent to monetary savings of PhP7.3 million annually. The goal of the PEEP is to reduce electricity consumption by 243 megawatts, which is equivalent to the emission avoidance of 172,000 tons of carbon dioxide and monetary savings of PhP3.2 billion annually.

Aside from lighting, BERDE considers energy efficiency in all aspects, including air, water, and waste in buildings to create a healthy environment for users and improve the quality of life.

The PEEP-EBI is a project of the DOE that aims to show the societal benefits of implementing a series of energy efficiency projects in different sectors. It was put in place to accelerate the implementation of a green building rating system by streamlining existing green building initiatives in the property sector. For this subcomponent, the DOE recognizes the BERDE-GBRS developed by the Philippine Green Building Council (PHILGBC) as the National Voluntary Green Building Rating System.

The government hopes to follow through on the certification of other buildings and set an example to other sectors when it comes to energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emission reduction in buildings.