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## Live Oak Opens Savannah's First LEED-Certified Building

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perform a rigorous series of tests on all systems within the building to ensure that these systems continue to perform in the most energy-efficient capacity.

If the library passes all of the informal inspections and when the agent's tests have verified that all systems within the facility are performing to the standards of peak efficiency, then the agent will certify the building, and the library will receive their LEED award of distinction at the appropriate level.

Sustainable, green design is an attainable goal for any public library construction, expansion or interior renovation project. LEED standards and practices of design are among the best principles that a library director and library board of trustees can follow to design tomorrow's libraries. There will be some additional costs that will be added to the project. There will be additional consideration and work that will be added to the project. And there also will be additional professionals who need to be subcontracted with to complete the project. But the overall human, environmental, cost recovery, and durability benefits that LEED construction brings to a library construction will far outweigh any additional efforts

that are necessary to complete a LEED-designed project. LEED is the method for responsible construction of future public libraries. ►►

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## Live Oak opens Savannah's first LEED-certified building

Live Oak Public Libraries cut the ceremonial ribbon for Chatham County's first LEED-registered building on Nov. 18. Numerous state and local elected officials, civic leaders and neighborhood groups attended the ceremony for the Southwest Chatham Branch in Savannah.

"We are very excited to open this new 50,000-square-foot LEED-certified building," said Director Christian Kruse. "We're even more proud, however, of how the community has flocked to it in the few short weeks since its opening. The public has embraced this wonderful new building and everything it has to offer. In this day and age, it's heartwarming to see just how important public libraries are to our community." The Southwest Chatham Branch is the second largest library in the 20-facility Live Oak system.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction. LEED-certified projects cost less to operate and maintain, are energy- and water-efficient and contribute to the health and productivity of their occupants. The new library will cost at least 30 percent less to operate than an average building of similar size, Kruse said.



*The exterior of the Southwest Chatham Branch*

The \$15 million facility first opened to the public on Oct. 20. It boasts approximately 100,000 books, DVDs, Blu-ray, CDs and audiobooks, and it features a 200-seat auditorium that will be available for public use.

Its children's department features a three-dimensional live oak tree made of steel that wraps around a 10-foot column and has an 18-foot canopy. For teens, the library offers four study rooms and two teen study lounges. The library also features a public-access computer room that seats up to 50 and a Friends of the Library store. ►►