

**CA Department of General Services
California Green Lodging Program**

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the California Green Lodging Program?

The California Green Lodging Program was established in 2004 by the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), and, as of September 2008, the Department of General Services (DGS) assumed the operation of the California Green Lodging Program.

The purpose of the Program is to bring together the lodging industry and state travelers, to protect the environment by diverting waste from landfills, conserving energy and water, and providing cleaner air to breathe. It was designed to acknowledge and reward environmentally conscious hotels in the lodging industry, as well as encourage State and local government travelers to seek out and give preference to these certified “green” hotels.

The Green Lodging Program’s efforts focus on the green certification of hotels that accept State and local government travelers.

2. Is there a fee to participate in the program?

There is a membership fee of \$200 for a one-year period or \$500 for a three-year period. Each property will need to show an active initiative of sustainability improvements to be eligible for a recertification. If each property meets the recertification requirements of the program, it will qualify for their selected one-year or three-year green certification for the program.

3. How does a hotel become a designated Green Lodging Program property?

To apply for consideration in the California Green Lodging Program, please fill out and return a [Hotel Survey](#). The hotel survey is a self-assessment that details the environmentally friendly practices necessary to meet the standards of the Green Lodging Program. Once the hotel completes the survey, Green Lodging staff will follow-up by contacting you. The next step will be to perform a [Field Survey](#) at your facility to ensure it meets the requirements to become a member of the Green Lodging Program. Once the field survey is completed, program evaluation and scoring will be conducted.

4. If we do not pass the initial Field Survey, are we allowed to improve and submit a second Field Survey?

Yes. You will have an opportunity to be reevaluated.

5. Once we are certified, do we get recertified/audited on a yearly basis?

The time period for your recertification will depend on the membership time period you have chosen, i.e., one-year or three-years.

6. What can I expect to see when staying at a designated property of the Green Lodging Program?

Each hotel is required to meet a minimum set of environmental practices. These practices that each hotel implements may differ from one hotel to another. Examples of things to look for include: recycling in the hotel lobby and guestrooms, energy efficient lighting in all indoor areas, water conserving fixtures or retrofits, proper disposal of waste and toxic substances, towel/linen reuse option, and various environmental purchasing policies.

7. What is the difference between one, two and three palm designation?



Participation Level - This is the entry level for the program. Participation level hotels are building their environmental green lodging programs. They achieved a field survey score of 250 to 324. Participation level hotels meet some of the seven program criteria, and have either one-year or three-years (depending on the selected time period) from their date of enrollment to demonstrate continuous improvement and elevate their rating to the Leadership Level.



Leadership Level - This is the second highest level of program participation. Leadership level hotels achieved a minimum field survey score of 325 to 349. They may have an environmental policy in place and meet most of the seven of the program's criteria; and have either one-year or three-years (depending on the selected time period) from their date of enrollment to demonstrate continuous improvement and elevate their rating to the Environmentalist Level.



Environmentalist Level - This is the highest level of program participation. Environmentalist Level hotels achieved a field survey score of 350 or more points. They have a written environmental policy in place and meet all of the seven of the program's criteria:

- Waste minimization
- Reuse/recycling
- Energy efficiency
- Conservation and management
- Waste management
- Freshwater resource management
- Hazardous materials management
- Environmentally and socially sensitive purchasing policies

8. Are there other Green Lodging programs currently in use?

In the United States, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia have implemented certification programs to identify facilities which have implemented continuing programs to conserve natural resources, reduce waste and minimizing pollution.