

## Mid-2020 Check-In: Green Building Stats, Trends, & Encouragement Transcript

Speaker 1 ([00:02](#)):

Welcome to Green Building Matters. The podcast that matters for green building professionals learn inside and green buildings. As we interview today's experts in LEED and WELL. We'll learn from their career paths, war stories and all things green because green building matters. And now our host and yes, he has every LEED and WELL credential. Here's Charlie Cichetti.

Charlie ([00:33](#)):

Be sure to check out the green building matters community where you can have unlimited exam prep for any of the professional credential exams. You're tackling next as WELL as putting your continuing education on autopilot, saving time with GBES reporting your hours on your behalf. Check it out. [Gbes.Com/Join](https://gbes.com/join). Now enjoy this episode of the green building matters podcast. Yes. Hi everyone. This is your host, Charlie Cichetti and today's gonna be a little different format. I'm actually just going to give a PSA, a public service announcement. I can't believe it we're halfway through 2020, what a wild and crazy year it has been for all of us. What I want to cover today is just some stats, some trends in the green building and now healthy building movement. We want to make sure you understand what's happening on the LEED front, WELL, FITWEL and other programs. We want to talk about credentials, credential trends, online learning. Want to tell you a little bit about how my company's in this green building movement have been innovative during the pandemic time.

Charlie ([01:41](#)):

I want to open up for some feedback on the podcast. So first, I know everyone's been impacted a little differently here with the pandemic and COVID-19, I hope you're okay. I hope you and your family are healthy. I hope your carriers and jobs are intact. I know some have been drastically affected much more than others. I know I'm still working from home. My boys are out of school now for the summer. I'm based here in Atlanta, Georgia, and we're definitely fortunate to be able to keep most of our work. Most of our projects, most of our learning going both from remote work and we're doing the best we can on all fronts. I know we're still in the middle of the pandemic

as we record this podcast, but I just want to give you some encouragement and just say, I hope everything is okay with you.

Charlie ([02:27](#)):

Let's take a look at some stats and friends. So the latest with LEED and let's start presidentials first. When in doubt, you can just go to Google and type in LEED professionals at a glance, and you can see the latest LEED professional accounts. We'll put a link in the show notes for all these websites. I'm going to be reading off some stats today on our uniquely formatted podcast this week. So there are 204,000 LEED professionals all over the world. And if you scroll on that page, you can actually see there's only about 35,600, the LEED green professionals. Of course, that's the credential you have to start with. You can go through and see how many credential holders are in each country. You can go through and sort by LEED AP BD policy or O +M, grading of existing buildings, only about 2,900 people have gone up for that specialty credential.

Charlie ([03:25](#)):

I know we're teaching more and more of these online series. We love to keep adding to the LEED professional count, the reality is some don't keep up their continuing education and they drop off each month and then a lot are added. But that 200,000 number is really kind of the whole group of LEED professionals. Now over the last 20 years if you add them all up for that's the truth. Some drop off some get added and we're seeing, of course you still need to start with the LEED GA. A lot of our customers do go for LEED AP BD +C. So they can specialize in new commercial construction and major renovation buildings. But you may want to consider getting one of the other specialty credentials, Indy, or homes or interiors or existing buildings. Credentials are being added every single month and one big newsworthy note during the pandemic and just about a month ago, GBCI and Prometric are now allowing you to take your LEED and WELL exams from or work. You can take them virtual. So if a Prometric testing center near you, maybe it's not open yet, or you're not ready to go

Charlie ([04:39](#)):

Test in that facility, which as they reopened, you can, there's still the normal way. You can go take these 100 questions, multiple choice, closed book exams, but they just came out with it. You can take a look at our candidate

handbook on our free resources page, and you can read through what kind of webcam you need to have. It's still a closed book. There's a Proctor. You have to flash your idea a couple of times throughout the exam. They want to be able to look around and make sure you're not cheating, but you can now take your LEED and WELL exams virtually and that's through Prometric and GBCI so it's really big news. So if any of your kind of like I've been studying and I really want to take the exam, I don't know if my testing centers reopened yet. Check out the virtual option there to take your exam.

Charlie ([05:25](#)):

On the WELL AP. WELL accredited professional front, if you're going to WELL certified.com scroll all the way to the bottom and they're kind of a dark blue area. You'll see there's about 6,000 WELL APs that have passed their exam. And another about 6,200 that are in the hopper that are registered for the exam. So that's 12,000 people that have either passed or are about to pass the WELL AP exams. Fantastic. You know, that exam is based on WELL, version one, your LEED exams are based on LEED version four and then a minute I'll talk about my pivotal ambassador, but about 12,000 people total in the WELL AP passed it or in the queue to go pass it soon. But about 200,000 LEED professionals, we're seeing a really nice growth in the WELL AP count in the hundreds.

Charlie ([06:20](#)):

So keep an eye on that. There might be the next credential you're thinking of. So you really have a good foundation for what's it take to be a healthy building? Yes. The WELL, AP is a tricky exam. What a medical statistic, maybe you haven't had the same report, but really consider going after that credential, your WELL AP is based on WELL version one. And that'll be the case until summer 2021. So while each LEED and while exam, or maybe you're going to have some tweaks made in the summer of 2020 because of the pandemic GBCI of course it gives out RPMs and also certifies our green building and healthy building projects. They push those updates to next year to summer 2021. So if you're going to study your WELL AP, it's still based on, WELL, version one, that foundational seven concept seven categories, and that's what you'll need to study based on.

Charlie ([07:17](#)):

FITWEL ambassador. We've actually seen a lot of growth in this credential. If you go to [fitwell.org](http://fitwell.org). So you can actually take their online course. So the center for active design, we're seeing a lot of growth in the federal program and filling an ambassador after you took the online course, you take the 50 question, open book, multiple choice quizzes. And once you pass it, then you are a FitWELL ambassador. And so it's about \$250. Take the online course, study a little bit, go take the quiz and get that professional credential. We're seeing about 1,901 bachelor's at this time. All right. So those are our credential count updates. As we record the, at the very beginning of July, 2020. Now let's talk about the project. We're going to put a link in the show notes to the US green building council's data every quarter.

Charlie ([08:15](#)):

And they put out LEED project certifications by square footage by location, by country. And it's just a fantastic third quarter resource. One's not posted yet, but fourth quarter 2019. And so this is pre COVID. We can see there was 150 million square feet of new construction. LEED BD plus C building design and construction certified done plaque on the wall. We've got about 9.5 million square feet of interiors certified on the existing going side, always exciting. We've got 70 million feet. And so just a, just a tremendous amount of LEED square footage certified, just a fourth quarter 2019. This statistics still averages about 2.2 million square feet of LEED buildings around the world. Getting certified every single day, we are on LEED version four and in beta or LEED version 4.1 that incremental adjustment actually LEED 4.1. There are responses that have been gathered over the last year, year and a half, and that they will go out for final public comment and ballot and then get locked in.

Charlie ([09:31](#)):

So the reality is in July, 2020 based on feedback for the LEED building design and construction and LEED interior design and construction credit language, there will be an agenda that's sent out by the USGBC in July, 2020, but we'll go ahead and make a few tweaks LEED version 4.1, you know, on the existing building side ARC and LEED version 4.1 on the O and M side locked in for a good while. Now, there may be few more updates on that side, so stay tuned, but essentially if you have a LEED project you're going for weed right now, and you haven't registered yet, you can register it

for LEED version four or per LEED version 4.1. The pro tip really is to register for Leber's four and pull forward some of the 4.1 items and credits that will benefit your project, but say tuned July, 2020, the year CDC is going to send out some agenda.

Charlie ([10:33](#)):

Hopefully that'll be more accommodating to some of your projects on some of the light items that the public has commented on. We are seeing growth with LEED per cities, LEED communities. And so take a look at those programs. We'll post the link to a really good writeup and infographics about LEED cities and LEED communities. Let's talk WELL in these two healthy buildings, or as I like to call it WELLness real estate programs for 4.5 Almost 5 years old. Now they were already really growing before the pandemic. But as you can imagine, is this a healthy building? The questions getting asked a lot as we're building buildings on tenant spaces or especially reoccupying or thinking about renewing a lease in a building is this a healthy building so WELL and fit WELL, really spiking right now, as WELL as real time, a queue monitoring device.

Charlie ([11:29](#)):

Let's take a look WELL as up here, July 1st, the time of this recording for the podcast, 308 WELL certified projects, WELL plaque on the wall, but 4,000 registered pursuing it going for that. WELL now, so that 300 might seem pretty WELL, but actually you add up all the registered projects. It's over 583 million feet in 62 countries. So the WELL momentum is they're really seeing a lot of growth with the team at BI in the WELL building movement on the FITWEL side, WELLS actually gained quite a bit of market share for different product types, different building types, especially existing buildings, larger existing buildings, multi-tenant buildings, what can be applied to new construction or new tenant build out. So check out the CDC back research and the FitWELL program over 400 projects, either certified or pending certification, almost there are a thousand registered people in parenting.

Charlie ([12:36](#)):

This is something that could really pride itself in its number of people impacted. And again, the CDC research, this is also an international program. So seeing a lot of growth with, WELL, and FitWELL now remember LEED going strong global, is this a green building rating system? LEED is still

really one out there? You know, LEED is all about what's my building's impact on the environment, but WELL, WELL, what's my building's impact on the people in the building. So that's when we get into the LP building side of it productivity and so much more interestingly, during the pandemic, we've seen some spinoff programs or a program already existed, and now it's like front and center. For example, we do some work on stadiums and convention centers and arenas. And in that kind of facilities management for large gathering space, there's the global bio risk advisory council or GBAC.

Charlie ([13:35](#)):

And you can get a certification around your bio risk and bio and bone protocol. And so we've seen in kind of the meeting planning, right spaces, large gathering spaces, but GBAC, which we'll put a link to in the podcast. So check that out. You may want to pull forward some of the best practices from that program for a lot of clients right now, if they need that formal third party validated certification and plaque we're doing WELL or, WELL, again, some large meeting spaces might do the official certification. Yes, we're only following the best practices, but see it validated. We're really doing this, especially if we can others, right now, it's about re occupancy, but it's about pulling the best practices from each of these programs like, WELL, WELL, what were you doing? Say for example, with air quality before, depending on what you are doing during, with your sanitation, your green cleaning with your air filters, maybe you let them boil and what are you going to do going forward?

Charlie ([14:41](#)):

That's what parents want to know right now. Another spinoff or add on, I should say, WELL came out with a health safety rating. And so you want to check out that it's an evidence based third party verified rating. It's focused there on the facilities side. So existing buildings, multiple building types, and what are those best practices we should be doing in our facility for a quick focus on both safety and respectfully as we reoccupied. This may be something you want to consider. You can check that out again. WELL, [certified.com/help](https://certified.com/help) type of safety. We'll put the link in the podcast show notes. So we're seeing new programs or new alums spin off here to help us get through the pandemic there. One more good resource. I want to put in today's podcast show notes on our Greenville and consulting firm, SIG his

website would pull together kind of our top 10 COVID-19 resources from BOMA, from Cushman and Wakefield as they help.

Charlie ([15:41](#)):

Reoccupied a lot of office buildings in Asia. They share their lessons learned there and their best practices fit WELL and WELL in the world health organization, a lot of good resources we pulled together. And we'll put that in the show notes. Please take a look at it. If you're considering going back to your office, maybe in phases, different protocols, or just need some good resources to share with your clients, we've pulled together really nice short words here. Alright, WELL, let's talk about some innovation even here. My green building companies. Unfortunately we work in this industry for a long time now and at the very beginning of the pandemic I was really asked the question a lot. I want you to still ask it because I think hidden in there some encouragement, which is what makes all this make possible. So really proud of our team at GBS downtown, for example we really ramped up our online learning.

Charlie ([16:40](#)):

We've done a lot of online live classes. For example, normally we would fly instructors around the country and some internationally to help do one or two day exam prep workshops. How do you pass that LEED exam? Or maybe perhaps the WELL AP and of course practice stems flashcards, but it's always important to have that expert instructor who's passed the exam, show you where you need to focus WELL, as we weren't able to travel, we ramped up for two hour live classes, so eight hours over the course of a month and they've just been fantastic. So that's an example of being innovative while we couldn't travel. You know what, let's still make this live leaking interactive ask questions. So that's been a big success in the pandemic as WELL as webinars. We've just had some fantastic webinars, various topics, but I really liked the show and tell case studies, two of my favorites in the last three months.

Charlie ([17:35](#)):

And we can put some links, but you can always check that out on GBS.com We interviewed Sean Aurora who runs the new living building at Georgia tech. Wow. What a fantastic building. Interestingly, during the pandemic here with the building, pretty much unoccupied, you've just been producing solar

and letting that hit the rest of the grid there on the Georgia tech campus. Because first of all, living buildings, you have to be net positive and they've just been producing. So I thought that was impressive. And another fun interview we did, I was with Richard, who's the president CEO of the Phipps conservatory and botanical gardens in Pittsburgh. They actually have multiple living buildings and LEED projects on the campus there, the botanical gardens, just fantastic to hear what kind of pull to them towards such as the LEED at a lower level. But no, no, if we're going to do this, we're going to do it right.

Charlie ([18:30](#)):

And they went all in on sustainability and multiple building certifications, really, really fun projects there. So I want to make sure, you know, a lot of webinar part of my team. So we've been putting out a lot of great content because adult learning and professionals going after that continuing education or constant exam is up during the pandemic. A lot of us work from home, no commute and professional development, usually at the bottom of it to do list it's smooth, it's way up. So we're actually seeing a nice spike in online learning, but we have to give to our customers in different formats and now let's talk about some innovation here for SIG And in my green building consulting firm, super proud of the team there as WELL. Just a few examples. There's been so many where we've innovated building out tools for the green building movement, and we've already been doing that and we're ramping it up.

Charlie ([19:24](#)):

So stay tuned for that, right? A Q indoor air quality. You know, some of this testing we do manually usually go into job sites, but we've been able to deploy sensors, send that out to a building engineer or facilities management team with them to pull the sensors. We're gathering data back over the, through the cloud. We can still do a lot of our IAQ and WELLness work and just in general, and this is what you need to ask yourself in your businesses. As much as you know, I love to travel, flying to New York city and go do business there and go to all these amazing projects we get to work on, you know, what work can you still do? Virtually from afar? What data can you gather if someone's at the project or construction side or our building, can they send you back information or pictures, your video, and you can still do a lot of what you need to do, but from a bar, I think we've all had the answer to that question, but we've done a lot of that.



Charlie ([20:23](#)):

And that's helped us be able to just keep going and spend the weekend here. So a lot of innovation has been happening on that front. As we start to wrap up today's public service announcement, just a couple last things here. Remember that question? What does all this make possible? And you can ask that not just here during the pandemic, but in a lot of tough situations. I love the podcast. We've been doing a program two years now, actually longer than that. So almost two and a half. Now got a great theme. Want to give a shout out to some of the podcast team members, Carla and Danny couldn't do the podcast without you. So thank you so much. And I want to ask everyone that's a loyal listener. Give me feedback. Do you have someone you want interviewed? Do you still love the interview format?

Charlie ([21:08](#)):

Is there another question or two you'd love me to work into the rotation? I've been fortunate to interview just green building professionals, in a small world. We've had some fantastic interviews coming up, but for sending feedback, if you want a little more often me to come on and talk about a hot topic or do an ask me anything, please let me know. And the best way to do that is you shoot me an email [charlie@gbes.com](mailto:charlie@gbes.com). I'll make sure I take a look there. We have a conversation I'd love to hear. Lastly, halfway through this year. I know I have a friend. He's already planning his New Year's Eve party to bury 2020. It's been a tough one for all of us. This shall pass anything at all reach out, but I just want to say thank you for continuing to listen to the green building matters podcast. I just want to say thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the green building matters podcast, me and the entire team. We're stoked and just so glad to continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with a green building professional here in this industry, or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you are getting straight from us straight to you.

Charlie ([22:27](#)):

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