



PROJECT PROFILE: Oracle's Dedication to Sustainable Practices Brings Four Green Globes® to 488 Almaden

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BRANDI CALDERON
Property Manager,
Embarcadero Realty Services

PROJECT RATING:



To earn Four Green Globes® certification, an existing building must make exceptional strides in proven operational resource conservation and reduced environmental impacts. The Oracle Office Building at 488 Almaden Boulevard in San Jose, California achieved these goals not once, but twice. In 2016, the building received its first award of Four Green Globes under the Existing Buildings (EB) category, and again obtained the highest level of certification in 2019.

"We put a lot of time into the building before seeking any certifications to make sure it was running as sustainably as possible," says Brandi Calderon, Property Manager of Embarcadero Realty Services. "The building is a representation to the community of Oracle's commitment to sustainable practices."

Originally built in 2002, the 18-story office building was acquired by Oracle in 2011. Danny Alexander, Chief Building Engineer of ABLE Engineering, says that Oracle gave the building team the latitude to experiment. "Once we connected our control system to the utility company, I could see how much energy we were using at any given time," Alexander recalls. "I tested out some unorthodox scenarios and reduced our electricity demand by almost 25 percent."



Alexander's diligence helped the building's ENERGY STAR score rise to 94. In addition to this remarkable level of energy performance, Oracle 488 Almaden gained high points under Green Globes for a variety of accomplishments.

- The facility has a written environmental policy, and goals and targets for energy, water, hazardous materials, and training.
- Better cooling tower water management through increased concentration cycles significantly reduced makeup water for the cooling tower.
- New water meters, low-flow faucets, and water closets with flush valves were installed to reach a new goal of water use reduction by 5% from 2018.
- Waste is regularly monitored and diverted from the landfill. The current waste diversion rate exceeds 85%.
- Housekeeping uses environmentally preferable cleaning products.

Show and Tell

Alexander points out that the Green Globes process was straightforward, and the assessor was easy to work with. "Our Green Globes Assessor was an engineer, and when he came out for the on-site walkthrough, he enjoyed seeing the building and hearing about the things we'd done here."

The assessor noted that management shared sustainable practices with tenants and staff through many forms of communication. Reminders and posters are visible in the tenant spaces, restaurant, and common areas. A video monitor on the first floor shows energy usage in different parts on the building in real time. "Education is a priority," explains Alexander. "If we can teach people how much energy they're using, they become more conscious of it and take steps to reduce their consumption."

Management issues a quarterly newsletter with substantial information on energy and water conservation practices. In addition, Oracle hosts an annual Green Fair where local vendors and utilities can showcase sustainable choices. "We make it an interactive, fun event," says Calderon. "Everyone needs to be involved in sustainable measures for us to have cleaner air and less garbage - not just on a building level, but on a global level."

Calderon sees the value of Green Globes certification as threefold. "Our certification quantifies what we're doing, shows building occupants the results of our collective efforts, and is a way to thank our tenants and staff for their contributions to sustainable operations."



GREEN GLOBES RATINGS:

After the final assessment is verified by a third party, properties achieving a score of 35% or higher receive a Green Globes rating based on the percentage of total points achieved (up to 1000).



85-100%

FOUR GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates world-class leadership in resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.



70-84%

THREE GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates outstanding success in resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.



55-69%

TWO GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates significant achievement in resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.



35-54%

ONE GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates a strong commitment to resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.