

Woolworths Palmyra store achieves GBCSA 5-star rating

The Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA), using the Green Star SA – Existing Building Performance Custom Tenant rating tool, has awarded the Woolworths Palmyra store in Claremont, Cape Town a 5-star rating.



It is the first retail outlet in South Africa to achieve this rating. The rating tool is a measure of the store's environmental performance over a period of 12 months in operation, and is valid for three years before it expires.

Since opening its doors in 2010, the food market store has always been groundbreaking when it comes to advanced green building features. It set the benchmark within the Woolworths property portfolio, meeting the requirements for a platinum rating of the Woolworths SA Real Estate Division's own green assessment programme. Ernst & Young (EY) independently audits this internal rating system each year.

Many environmentally friendly features

The store has a list of environmentally friendly features:

- automated doors to maintain the interior temperature
- reclaimed heat from the refrigeration system and air conditioning used for under-floor heating
- harvested rainwater used to flush the toilets
- CO2 refrigeration system

- skylights to optimise natural light
- fully automated lighting that guarantees no energy is wasted on lighting when natural light is available

“GBCSA congratulates Woolworths on embracing green building practices and leading the way in creating more sustainable retail outlets in the country, such as this one, and for having this independently verified through the country’s leading authority on green buildings,” says Manfred Braune, chief technical officer of the GBCSA.

“This is not just about doing the right thing, although that is, of course vital in the face of our local and global environmental challenges. It also makes good business sense to be investing in renewable energy, water harvesting and using innovative energy and water saving practices. Going forward, we look forward to seeing more green transformation in the retail industry in South Africa.”

The evaluation considered nine impact categories – Management, Indoor Environment Quality, Energy, Transport, Water, Materials, Land-use & Ecology, Emissions and Innovation. The Terramanzi Group prepared the submission to the GBCSA, through its team of Green Star SA Accredited Professionals.

Justin Smith, Woolworths’ group head of sustainability, says, “We are delighted by this recognition of the store’s green credentials. It has become an important blueprint and we use it as a model in our ongoing efforts to develop greener retail environments across the group. In addition, as part of our Green Building Programme, we made our biggest single investment in sustainability last year with the installation of an R16.8 million solar PV system at our Midrand Distribution Centre. This has resulted in between 26% to 34% of the centre’s energy being generated from a perfectly renewable, clean source. We will continue to reduce our climate change impact by adopting and implementing green building practices across our business.”

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