



Part Three: LEED v4 O+M Outdoor Water Reduction Credits

The **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)** green building rating system offers credits for reduction of outdoor water use. The credit prerequisites and requirements vary based on building and project type.

In this article we will explain the credit options for the Outdoor Water Use Reduction in the Water Efficiency credit category for Building Operations and Maintenance (O+M) project types. The O+M category applies to existing buildings that are undergoing renovations or improvements.

LEED v4 Water Efficiency Credit Category for O+M Project Type

The O+M Water Efficiency credit category consists of two prerequisites and four areas where project teams can earn up to 13 credits. The O+M project type covers a wide range of building types. A complete list can be found [here](#).

Water Efficiency Credits for O+M Project Types

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Prerequisite 1 | Indoor Water Use Reduction | Required |
| Prerequisite 2 | Building Level Water Metering | Required |
| Credit 1 | Outdoor Water Use Reduction | Up to 2 points |
| Credit 2 | Indoor Water Use Reduction | Up to 5 points |
| Credit 3 | Cooling Tower Water Use | 2-4 points |
| Credit 4 | Water Metering | 2 points |

Unlike BD+C projects, there are no prerequisites for O+M outdoor water use reduction credits.

Credits for Outdoor Water Use Reduction O+M Projects

Projects can earn up to two points by using either Option 1, 2 or 3.

- **Option 1:** No irrigation required beyond the two-year establishment period earns 2 points, or
- **Option 2:** No irrigation meter installed; calculated water budget is calculated using the [WaterSense Water Budget Tool](#)
 - 30% reduction earns 1 point
 - 40% reduction earns 2 points, or
- **Option 3:** Irrigation meter is installed, therefore project teams do not need to use the WaterSense Water Budget Tool
 - 30% reduction earns 1 point
 - 40% reduction earns 2 points





Required Documentation

The required documentation varies based on the option chosen for the project.

Option 1: No irrigation is required after two-year establishment period.

- Narrative for plant species and water requirements

Option 2: Reduce irrigation by at least 30% or 40% from the calculated baseline for the site's peak watering month.

- Site plan showing location and size of landscape zones
- Alternative water supply calculations
- Water budget tool report

Option 3 (Irrigation Meter Installed): Reduce irrigation by at least 30% or 40% from the calculated baseline for the site's peak watering month.

- Site plan showing location and size of landscape zones
- Alternative water supply calculations
- Irrigation meter report (monthly summaries)

Related Credits and the Impact on Outdoor Water Efficiency

The related credits for cooling tower water use and water metering can contribute to helping achieve the credits for Outdoor Water Use Reduction. For instance, using the building's cooling tower water can also be used as the alternative water source to help reduce the potable water demand for irrigation.

