

# DEA opens doors of new head office to public

Members of the public recently had an opportunity to see the Department of Environmental Affairs' (DEA) R653m head office in Pretoria in action.



In the spirit of sharing best practice and educating South Africans about sustainable building strategies, the DEA opened its doors for a building tour, which was hosted by the Green Building Council of SA (GBCSA).

The 30,654m<sup>2</sup> building, located in Pretoria's busy Arcadia node, has achieved a 6 Green Star SA Office Design rating - one of only three buildings in the country to meet the strict green specifications and the only government office of its size to do so.

"Given the DEA's green leadership in developing this head office, we wanted to give the public an opportunity to witness the space in action," says Brian Wilkinson, CEO at the GBCSA.

The tour was aimed at highlighting how the building sets and meets stringent sustainability targets - and what those targets mean for occupants. Office workers, for instance, will breathe 150% more fresh air than mandated by law.

## Connected to nature

With the 60% of usable area having direct sight of the outdoors, occupants will be able to check the weather and stay connected to nature. "Just imagine the impact on office workers, who can breathe fresh air and look outside from almost every part of their office building," says Wilkinson.

The energy consumption goals are ambitious: not only is annual usage capped at 115kWh/m<sup>2</sup> but a full 10% of

consumption needs will be supplied by renewable sources. To achieve this, solar panels installed on the roof will generate 20% of the building's energy needs. Building orientation has likewise been optimised to minimise consumption.

Water consumption will be 30% less than an average office, thanks to rainwater harvesting and high-efficiency irrigation systems. And the 7,652m<sup>2</sup> of landscaped grounds and 465m<sup>2</sup> of roof garden will feature water-wise indigenous plants.

To encourage active transportation - walking and cycling - the development provides safe and secure bike parking, secure storage lockers and change-room facilities. And, in a unique green innovation, there are solar-powered charging stations for electric cars located in the parking area of the building.

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