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## New Standards Promote Sustainable Roofing

By James Baker

Asphalt built-up roofing (BUR) and modified bitumen roofing systems play a central role in the development and operation of institutional and commercial facilities. BUR and modified bitumen systems combined account for more than 35 percent of new construction and more than 41 percent of reroofing projects for low-slope applications, according to the National Roofing Contractors Association.

Increasingly, these systems are getting more attention for the benefits they offer institutional and commercial facilities looking to expand their sustainability efforts.

### Responding to Change

Several major developments in the past year designed to promote sustainability within facilities are likely to affect the way maintenance and engineering managers specify roofing systems.

First, the [California Energy Commission](#) adopted new [Title 24](#) legislation, and its standards for nonresidential buildings become effective in August 2009.

Second, the [American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers](#) released a draft of ASHRAE/USGBC/IESNA Standard 189.1P, [Standard for High-Performance Green Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings](#).

Third, President Barack Obama signed the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#), providing billions of dollars to build and retrofit buildings to promote energy efficiency.

Finally, the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) recently issued an updated [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\)](#) rating system.

As managers search for environmentally responsible roofing systems in response to these actions, as well as to support their organizations' sustainability efforts, the greenest roofs might be tried-and-true asphalt BUR and modified bitumen membranes.



Manufacturers of asphalt BUR and modified bitumen systems offer a series of reasons to support their claim black is the new green, and managers and their organizations can benefit from taking a fresh look at the way these products fit into discussions of sustainability.

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