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Green building code in Dubai from next year

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DUBAI — All buildings coming up in Dubai from next year will have to comply with the 'Green' building standards of the Dubai Municipality (DM) failing which the building plans will not be passed, Issa Al Maidour, Assistant Director-General for Planning and Building Affairs, said on Monday.

The municipality is preparing a legislative framework, termed 'Green Building Code', for the developers, contractors and consultants to follow.

'All building plans coming to us from next year must comply with the code. Right now, we have certain regulations regarding the use of heat insulators in the buildings like insulated floors amid slabs. The Green building standards would have more stipulations,' he said.

An official of the Building Department said though the existing or buildings under construction would not be asked to change their plans, developers could make renovation and alteration. A separate section within the Building Department would help such developers in the process.

'The new projects will have to comply with the energy- and water-efficiency requirements, landscaping facilities, waste-efficiency requirements, proper site selection, indoor and outdoor air quality requirements, etc. There will be minimum requirements which need to be met by the developers,' the official said on condition of anonymity since he is not authorised to speak.

'From January next year, the Building Permit Department will approve the different projects on a case-to-case basis,' the official said.

The municipality is organising a meeting-cum-workshop with the developers on Wednesday at the Dubai Festival City to discuss the matter and give them the required information.

Last year, His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, issued a direction, stating that all buildings constructed in Dubai from next year should meet the Green building standards.

Following this, the Emirates Green Building Council (EGBC) launched a building sustainability assessment system for the UAE based on the US Green Building Council's (US GBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, with modifications made to account for the local environmental conditions.

The proposed LEED Emirates system is with the US GBC for evaluation. The main modifications to the US LEED system includes an increased emphasis on water conservation. The potential total possible points have also been raised from 69 to 72.




The EGBC intends to begin a pilot programme in October to try the use of the rating system. The aim is to apply the system to 25 new building projects that are currently in the design phase. The feedback from the pilot scheme will be used to update the rating system.

Currently, 16 countries, including the United States, China, India, Austria, Australia, Canada, the Philippines and the UAE are involved in the Green building initiatives.

WHAT IS A GREEN BUILDING?

- A green building is an environment-friendly building that aims at reducing its impact on the environment
- It has less harmful impact on human health and the environment because of its better design, construction, operation and maintenance
- A green building on an average saves 70 per cent of electricity, 50 to 60 per cent of water and 36 per cent of energy than standard buildings

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