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Green Roof Fact Sheet



What is a green roof?

A green roof is a low-maintenance, vegetated roof system that stores rainwater in a lightweight, engineered soil. The stored water is taken up by the plants on the rooftop and released back into the atmosphere through evaporation. As a result, compared to a conventional rooftop of the same area, much less water runs off of a green roof.



What are the benefits to property owners and communities?

- Reduces stormwater runoff volume and pollutant load entering streams.
- Reduces the urban heat island effect.
- Creates wildlife habitat, attracting pollinators, such as birds and bees.
- Attracts higher rents and maintains tenant retention at commercial properties with green roofs.
- Cleans the air by filtering particles such as smog and carbon dioxide.
- Can double the roof life and provide an extra layer of insulation to reduce heating and cooling costs.

How can you determine if your property is suitable for a green roof?

Green roofs work well on roof areas that are mostly sunny with a gradual slope, although steeper slopes can be accommodated with a few more structural elements. Every green roof must be constructed on top of a sturdy roof structure. Extensive green roofs (referred to as roof meadows) support a variety of low-growing, drought-tolerant plants. They are relatively light and thin and are suitable for residential properties. Intensive green roofs are thicker and heavier and may include shrubs and small trees. Intensive green roofs are often designed as building amenities for a commercial application.

Qualifying for a rebate

The green roof must replace an existing roof area rather than expanding the original roof footprint. A structural load analysis report from a licensed structural engineer is required for approval.

Project	Individual Residence or Individual Members of a Housing Cooperative	Commercial, Homeowner Associations, Condominium Associations, Civic Associations, Multi-Family Dwellings, Nonprofits, Not-for-Profit Organizations, Housing Cooperatives
Green Roofs	\$10 per square foot (minimum 1/4 roof retrofit)	\$10 per square foot if less than 6 inches of planting material; \$20 per square foot if over 6 inches of planting material (minimum 1/4 roof retrofit)

What are the costs?

Depending on the type of green roof, the cost can be between \$15 and \$40 per square foot, based on size and slope of the roof; depth and complexity of the system; height and accessibility from the ground; labor costs; and the need for specialized elements, like drains, railing, pavers, and slope stabilization measures.

Can you do this project yourself?

A green roof retrofit is not recommended as a do-it-yourself project. To be eligible, a certified green roof contractor must install your green roof.

