

## element hotels

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## Starwood Hotels' element Brand to Mandate LEED Certification in All Hotels Brand-Wide

From Energy-Efficient Appliances and Environmentally-Friendly Lighting to Magnetic "Do Not Disturb" Signs, **element** Creates All New Green Hotels

Great for the Earth and Great for Guests, **element** to Offer Healthier, Cleaner Environments and a No-Compromise Eco-Chic Guest Experience

White Plains, NY – April 21, 2008: In an industry first, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. (NYSE:HOT) today announced that its newest brand, **element** hotels, will require all hotels brand-wide to pursue the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) LEED certification. With its first hotel debuting this summer and more than 20 hotels set to open by the end of 2009, **element** will make history as the first major hotel brand to commit to LEED certification.



### element Paves a Green Path for Developers – 20 hotels by 2009

Designed for longer stays, and consisting entirely of new-build hotels, **element** is uniquely positioned in the industry to spur widespread green development. **element** designated its first hotel, Starwood-owned **element** Lexington, MA scheduled to open in July 2008, as a working laboratory to test the latest in green construction, products, design and operations. Using these learnings, the **element** brand has created a road map for developers which streamlines certification pursuits and provides a pathway to cost-effective green building. Starwood's research indicates that LEED certification is achievable at a minimal cost premium. In addition, **element**'s research shows that the initial investment can be recouped within a few years, given associated operational savings.

**element** is committed to bringing more green building to our communities, including more than 20 planned **element** hotels which will pursue LEED certification in markets including New York, Chicago, Orlando and Las Vegas.

"Leading the way in hotel innovations is part of Starwood's DNA and fundamental to our success," said Frits van Paasschen, Starwood's Chief Executive Officer. "With the launch of **element**, we're creating a new way to build hotels and guest experiences through the lens of environmental responsibility. By testing and refining **element** in our own laboratory, we are developing an economically responsible LEED-certified hotel concept that is accessible to developers and designed to be replicated, promising a more sustainable future."

### Great for the Earth, Great for Guests

**element**'s key green features are cleverly designed to be as appealing aesthetically as they are eco-friendly, so travelers never compromise on style and comfort. They include energy efficient stainless steel appliances and lighting, water-efficient faucets and fixtures and bins for paper, plastic and glass which make recycling easy. Filtered water in guestrooms and amenity dispensers in the showers reduce plastic bottle waste. In addition, **element** hotels use low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints and carpets with up to 100% recycled content and antimicrobial carpet pads which improve indoor air quality for guests and staff. Guests driving hybrid cars are rewarded with priority parking. Even the ubiquitous "Do Not Disturb" sign gets a green makeover, replacing the traditional paper tag with the environmentally-friendly magnet.

Each **element** hotel is infused with natural light, featuring a 16-foot window wall in the lobby and oversized windows in each guestroom providing sightlines to the outdoors. Biophilic design—literally meaning the love of living systems—is the art of bringing the outside world in and natural colors and patterns are reflected in the **element** rooms and public space design and furnishings.

“**element’s** efforts around green are great for the Earth and great for our guests,” said Brian McGuinness, **element** hotels’ Global Brand Leader. “From improving the quality of the air, to minimizing pollutants and toxic chemicals, to providing ample access to natural light, **element** provides a cleaner, healthier environment and a sense of well-being, all designed to help our guests thrive on the road.”

### No-Compromise, Eco-Chic Guest Experience

Committed to providing a no-compromise, eco-chic experience, **element** makes it easy to be environmentally responsible without having to sacrifice a great guest experience. Travel indulgences at **element** include Westin Heavenly® Bed, spa-like bathrooms with oversize showers and rain showerheads which are water efficient, a state-of-the-art fitness center, fresh and healthy complimentary breakfast and organic pantry options, plus the latest in technology and neat extras like complimentary bikes for guests and staff and local area information on the TV.

Just as W Hotels served as an incubator for Starwood’s innovation in hotel style and design and Westin Hotels & Resorts forged a new path in hotel bedding when it launched the Heavenly Bed, **element** is poised to serve as Starwood’s green trailblazer, with the intent of migrating key learnings to its sister brands including Westin, Sheraton and W Hotels.

Launched to the development community in 2006, **element** hotels are inspired by the design and positioning of Westin Hotels & Resorts and will promote balance through smart and sustainable design.

“Today’s consumers—including guests who stay with us, corporate customers who select hotel providers and the development community who build our hotels—are increasingly demanding green options when they select hotel brands,” said Robin Korman, Vice President of Marketing for **element** hotels. “As more cities require LEED certification, Starwood and **element** will be ahead of the industry in terms of developing and operating green hotels.”

The first **element** hotel opens in Lexington, MA (July 2008), followed by: **element** Summerlin (Las Vegas, NV); **element** Houston Vintage Park (Houston, TX), and **element** Arundel Mills (Baltimore, MD).

### USGBC’s LEED Certification

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is an internationally recognized third-party certification system for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings. A LEED certified building is one which has demonstrated a whole-building approach to sustainability in five key areas of human health and environmental impact: sustainable site development, water efficiency, energy performance and climate protection, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

The benefits of green building and LEED certification include:

- Lower operating costs and increased asset value.
- Healthy and comfortable interior environments, including clean air, non-toxic material use, daylight, connection to the outdoors and thermal comfort.
- Reduced waste sent to landfills.
- Efficient use of energy, water and other natural resources.
- Reduction of greenhouse gas and ozone depleting emissions.
- Improved regional air and water quality.
- Strong linkages to the community.



## USGBC Recognizes Starwood as a Leader in Hospitality and Green Building

Through **element's** commitment to LEED, Starwood has joined USGBC as a Portfolio Program Partner. USGBC's Portfolio Program is a leadership program for owners, tenants and managers in the green building movement who seek to integrate green building into their standard business practices.

"The portfolio program provides companies with the tools to integrate LEED into their standard practices," said Doug Gatlin, Vice President of Market Development for the U.S. Green Building Council. "Through Starwood's participation, they have contributed significantly to the development and refinement of this innovative program."

By aiming for LEED certification, **element** hotels are benefitting the environment in many different ways. Through its implementation of LEED principles, **element** hotels will:

Protect waterways and wildlife from pollution by:

- Controlling soil erosion, sedimentation and air-borne dust generation during the construction process.

Save energy and reduce carbon emissions by:

- Using a heating, ventilating and air conditioning system that has been optimized for energy efficiency.
- Selecting Energy Star® Appliances where possible.
- Using roofing materials that reflect heat from the sun and as a result put less demand on hotel air conditioning systems.
- Incorporating an environmentally-friendly lighting system with CFL and LED technology.
- Integrating a comprehensive recycling program. In 2005, recycling is estimated to have conserved enough energy to power 9 million households.

Protect the ozone layer by:

- Using CFC-free refrigerants in heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems.

Support renewable energy technology by:

- Purchasing wind power to offset 70% of electricity use for the first two years of operation.

Save water by:

- Installing custom water-fixture technologies. Improving water efficiency within hotels additionally reduces the burden on municipal water supplies and wastewater systems.
- **element** hotels Lexington will save approximately 942,000 gallons of potable water per year.

Reduce the amount of waste hauled to and disposed of in landfills by:

- Incorporating a comprehensive recycling program, including an in-room program.

Create a place where hotel guests and staff can thrive by:

- Using carpeting, paints, and adhesives that minimize air-borne pollutants.
- Providing ample access to daylight and views to the outdoors that promote a sense of well-being.
- Providing adjustable thermostats and lighting controls for guests and staff to adjust room conditions to best suit their needs.
- Ensuring good air quality by prohibiting smoking in and around the building.
- By using eco-friendly cleaning.

Help guests reduce carbon emissions and air pollutants by:

- Designating preferred parking spaces for hybrid and carpooling vehicles.
- Providing guests and staff access to bicycles and bicycle storage.

Promote sustainability and facilitate meaningful change by:

- Educating guests and staff on sustainable practices implemented in **element** hotels.

For more information visit [www.elementhotels.com](http://www.elementhotels.com)



#### About Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. is one of the leading hotel and leisure companies in the world with approximately 850 properties in more than 95 countries and 145,000 employees at its owned and managed properties. Starwood® Hotels is a fully integrated owner, operator and franchisor of hotels and resorts with the following internationally renowned brands: St. Regis®, The Luxury Collection®, Sheraton®, Westin®, Four Points® by Sheraton, W®, Le Méridien® and the recently announced Aloft<sup>SM</sup> and Element<sup>SM</sup> Hotels. Starwood Hotels also own Starwood Vacation Ownership, Inc., one of the premier developers and operators of high-quality vacation interval ownership resorts. For more information, please visit [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)

#### About the USGBC

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC – [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)) works to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built, and operated for the purpose of creating environmentally responsible, profitable, and healthy places to live and work. Founded in 1993, the USGBC is a nonprofit membership organization composed of leaders from every sector of the building industry. The USGBC has more than 13,000 member organizations and 77 regional chapters.

#### About LEED

The U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. LEED has been adopted nationwide by federal agencies, state and local governments, and private companies.

