

The WELL Health-Safety Rating & What You Need to Know
April 13, 2021
Illinois Green Alliance and BOMA/Chicago
Q&A Resource Document

Are any of these features different criteria than what is in the WELL standard? Or do they align so if you are pursuing WELL and earn these features, you can by default get the Health Safety rating?

WELL HSR is complimentary to full WELL Building Certification, although there is no direct overlap aside from the WELL v1 and v2 Innovation features WELL HSR highlights. The WELL and WELL HSR alignment tool can be found here: <https://resources.wellcertified.com/tools/well-health-safety-rating-feature-alignment-tool/>

The yearly fee does not change for renewals?

Correct. However, the soft costs and level of effort to prepare and submit documentation is substantially less for subsequent years. The annual fee for HSR certifications can be found here:

<https://www.wellcertified.com/health-safety/pricing>

Can you pursue the HSR for a core project?

Yes, you can. In each [feature](#), toggle “on” the WELL Core button to review the requirements.

CONCEPTS / CLEANING AND SANITIZATION PROCEDURES / FEATURE SC1

Support Handwashing

Ensure support of hygienic hand washing practices for all individuals.

OVERVIEW STRATEGIES 1 FAQ 3 RESOURCE 5 VERIFICATION

SUMMARY
This feature requires projects to improve hygiene by offering hygienic soap containers and hand drying support.
[Read more](#)

REQUIREMENTS

What if the space is not owner occupied, is this a hindrance?

Projects need not be owner occupied, but WELL will only rate occupied spaces. It is common for tenants to pursue certification in multi-occupant buildings. Some features require geotagged images.

What has been the end-user response? Do they make decisions to frequent a business based on the WELL Health-Safety Rating?

It depends on the individual. Many businesses maintain restrictions due to Covid and occupants are yet to return to office per company policy. Nonetheless, the WELL HSR Seal will no doubt provide an additional level of confidence to occupants as offices and business resume normal operations.

What are the real-world outcomes? Do spaces with the WELL Health-Safety rating outperform the average building in terms of reduction in COVID spread?

There is no published or available data to support associated claims, although WELL publishes project case studies that may provide insight.

The CDC has finally come to terms that fomite (contaminated surfaces) transmission is negligible and that airborne transmission is the dominant route for COVID-19. What does the WELL Health-Safety Rating require to address long range aerosol transmission which is the most critical for indoor transmission?

WELL HSR follows the CDC’s guidance in terms of health and safety. There are no requirements with WELL HSR and the rating is not focused solely on pandemic response. The rating is focused on year-round health and safety for any disruptive activity (ex. pandemic, fire, power outage) and is designed for users to identify and address associated risks.

LEED requirements and Energy Star requirements have changed in the last 5 years making it almost impossible to achieve. How are these new certifications going to avoid that?

The certifications are focused on exceeding code and have a more stringent baseline (ex. carbon emissions) to align with certification’s mission (ex. combat climate change in a more expeditious manner). In my experience, LEED is not yet a deal breaker, but is more difficult in suburban locations since it is more difficult to display carbon reduction based on location (ex. transportation). WELL continues to evolve in response to the market and we would expect that the WELL HSR also evolves to improve rigor and adapt to the market over time.

From an engineering perspective, how do you see WELL Health Safety and similar ratings influencing future building systems design?

See response in webinar recording.

Can we achieve any of the WELL v2 credit to receive innovation credit in WHSR? If property managers can fill out the data themselves for indoor air quality testing etc., is there a concern about not having the data third party certified for accuracy?

See [Option 3](#) for the approved Innovation features tied to WELL v1 and v2. WELL does require qualified professionals to either complete certain technical activities and/or to sign letter of assurance. See the feature’s requirements. In contrast, there are no requirements for third party professionals to complete an HSR application.

How does the Well Health Safety rating compare to GBAC Star Accreditation?

WELL HSR recognizes GBAC Star Accreditation as “Gateway To Health-Safety”. More information found [here](#).

WELL Health-Safety Rating: Gateways to Health-Safety

The following presents a list of programs approved for feature *SI4: Gateways to Health-Safety*, the equivalent number of features each is worth, and Health-Safety features that are excluded from the scorecard of projects using each pathway.

Achievement	Managing Organization	Value	Exclusions
GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation	ISSA	5 features	SC1: Support Handwashing SC2: Reduce Surface Contact SC3: Improve Cleaning Practices SC4: Select Preferred Cleaning Products SC5: Reduce Respiratory Particle Exposure SI3: Innovation III

Are you seeing the range of fees for a consultant to assist with the minimum features or maximizing features at single property or is that across a portfolio?

It's largely been client driven, and if they are looking for a consultant to complete all documentation or only the features they do not have a qualified professional in-house to complete the documentation and/or letter of assurance.