

Springfield Casino Uses Sun, Rain to Grab Green Label

Written by Administrator

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The state's two full-scale casinos are sure to compete for customers, employees and attention, but MGM Springfield and Encore Boston Harbor could also be competing to see which casino can be more environmentally friendly.

MGM Resorts International announced Thursday that MGM Springfield is the first gaming resort in the world to receive a new construction LEED platinum certification.

"As a values-driven company, we are immensely proud that MGM Springfield is the first resort in the gaming industry to achieve the LEED Platinum certification," said Jim Murren, chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts International. "We are grateful for the response we have received from the community since opening our doors in August 2018, and we will continue to strive to be a good neighbor and explore innovative ways to improve operations, guest experiences and the surrounding areas."

MGM Resorts said a new, 1.13-megawatt solar array that GE Solar will install on the 8th floor of MGM Springfield's parking garage was "a significant enabler" of the LEED platinum rating. The solar canopy is expected to generate more than 1,600 megawatt-hours of electricity and reduce the resort casino's annual carbon footprint by the equivalent of 410 metric tons of carbon dioxide, MGM said.

The state's 2011 expanded gaming law requires the Gaming Commission to consider an applicant's plan for "being certified as gold or higher under the appropriate certification category in the Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design program" when it considers awarding a

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casino license.

MGM said its Springfield casino was able to secure LEED platinum certification because of other aspects of the project, including a rainwater collections system that provides all the water used for landscaping on the property, 50 electric vehicle charging stations and more.

While MGM Springfield celebrates its platinum-level certificate, Wynn Resorts' Encore Boston Harbor resort casino in Everett is on track to achieve LEED gold, according to a memo from Massachusetts Gaming Commission officials.

"Encore Boston Harbor has obtained a grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to help finance the installation of a battery backup system at the facility," Gaming Commission Ombudsman John Ziemba wrote in a memo earlier this month. "This system will work in conjunction with the solar photovoltaic system and allows Encore to purchase power for storage at off-peak periods to help reduce overall power costs and to provide additional backup power in the event of a power outage."

Encore Boston Harbor Vice President Jacqui Krum said the battery backup system will not be ready by the time the casino opens, but will not have an effect on operations.

"We were hoping we can hopefully go to the next level of LEED certification, but we ran into some issues in terms of placement so we need to look at alternative placement areas for that," Krum said at a commission meeting Monday.

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