

# US Embassy scores high in LEED Certification

THE LUMINARIES

Meralco upgrades bring in gold rating standard

US Deputy Chief of Mission Brian L. Goldbeck (middle) receives an award for Outstanding Corporate Commercial Partners from Meralco President and CEO Oscar S. Reyes (left) and Meralco Senior Vice President and Head, Customer Retail Services & Corporate Communications Alfredo S. Panlilio during the 2014 Meralco Luminaries Awards for the US Embassy's energy and environmental initiatives and tireless socio-civic efforts in the Philippines.



**T**echnical recommendations, upgrades, and preventive maintenance support from Meralco helped the US Embassy in Manila win the coveted Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification.

The LEED is the pre-eminent global recognition in energy and environmental initiatives that awards best-in-class building design strategies and practices. A gold mark indicates that a structure scored highly in a certification process that rates the building's impact on ecosystems and utility resources, smarter use of water to reduce potable water consumption, and better energy performance through innovative strategies.

From as far back as 2001, the US Embassy, or Chancery, had been in consultation with Meralco during renovations to its facilities at Roxas Boulevard, Manila. This paved the way for six-year upgrades, which included increasing their primary voltage from 13.8 kV to 34.5 kV, thereby improving power reliability, and allowing early energization of three new buildings.

This improvement project included the raising of two new office annexes. When construction was initially contracted, the Embassy specified that the building must not only be LEED-compliant but must also achieve the highest possible LEED rating.

In 2013, due to Meralco's counsel on energy and environmental prudence, the US Embassy won the impressive LEED Gold Certificate of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for its Consular Affairs Office.

"Meralco engineers were key partners throughout the development phases of the project and we continue to draw on their expertise," said US Deputy Chief of Mission Brian L. Goldbeck.



Meralco Relationship Manager Joy Mendoza (middle right) and Radius Telecom Inc. Marketing Specialist Adrian Rodolfo Erwin J. Guggenheim (extreme right) show upgrade proposals to representatives of the Chancery during a visit.

## Not just for Americans

The Chancery functions as more than an office for embassy services to US citizens based in the Philippines. As a representative of the American government, it also fulfills its socio-civic obligations to its host country.

The US Embassy actively participates in corporate citizenship efforts such as backing disaster preparedness in the Cordilleras and international coastal cleanups, vigorously supporting the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (K-L YES) Program for Muslim academic scholarships in the US and the rebuilding of Zamboanga.

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**-Brian L. Goldbeck**  
US Deputy Chief of Mission

They donated \$142.5 million for the victims of Typhoon Yolanda and provided much needed rice to those affected by Typhoon Pablo. The Embassy also organizes seafarer workshops for anti-piracy, regional media and legal aid clinics, as well as science film fests.

On a much lighter but equally important note, they recently hosted the first-ever eco fashion show: "Glitzy, Glamorous and Green."

By extending influence beyond the political theater, the US Embassy gained recognition at the 2014 Meralco Luminaries Award. Launched in 2012, the Meralco Luminaries is a program that highlights the best collaborations between the utility and the private and public sector, and showcases originality and excellence in strategy, thought leadership, execution, and application of technology.

"It is heartening for Meralco that the American government and their representatives work with us in our quest for energy efficiency and sustainability," said Meralco Vice President and Head of Corporate Business Group Victor S. Genuino. "If the US Embassy can set an example in its eco efforts in the Philippines, other American establishments in the country will have a perfect model to emulate."

"The US Embassy enjoys an excellent relationship with Meralco and continues to coordinate closely on issues related to our electricity supply," Goldbeck adds.

Credit Meralco Relationship Manager to the Chancery, Joy Mendoza, for maintaining an excellent working relationship with the Embassy's facilities and energy team. The Embassy is a stronghold for the US, and thus has strict security protocols despite contracting for facility upgrades.

Mendoza ably managed Meralco's engagement while still keeping the integrity of the protocols intact. And her understanding of the Embassy's unique set-up and needs led to Meralco being able to bring in subsidiaries to provide value-added services.

## Energy efficiency as a precursor to nation building

During renovation and construction of the buildings annexes, the US Embassy depended on Meralco for preventive maintenance and facilities improvements on its power infrastructure. The utility regularly conducted energy audits and billing reviews to ensure that the new facilities would be able to operate at full capacity.

To provide vertically integrated energy services, Meralco pulled in two subsidiaries – Radius, to install dedicated redundancy Internet access, and Miescor, to provide value engineering and installation services.



Miescor representative Antonio Lopez (left) and Meralco Relationship Manager Joy Mendoza (middle) are accompanied by US Embassy Senior Facility Manager Paul Schaefer during an on-grounds electrical facilities inspection.

The collaboration with the utility in the latter led the Embassy to adopt the use of energy-saving compact fluorescent bulbs, air-conditioning systems with refrigerants that do not harm the ozone layer, solar panels, and on-site waste water treatment to irrigate the Embassy grounds.

It is said that true sustainability includes a commitment to see the world as interconnected – each action has an impact on others and the environment. This understanding will certainly go far in providing the blocks necessary for building a better and brighter nation.

"As one of the largest companies in the country, we are duty-bound in advocating energy and environmental efficiency," said Meralco Senior Vice President and Head, Customer Retail Services & Corporate Communications Alfredo S. Panlilio. "Naturally, we look for partners who share in our vision of sustainability. Our relationship with the US Embassy is a prime example of a partnership that works for the common good."

**For more collaboration with Meralco, you may call the Meralco Business Hotline at 16210 or visit [www.meralco.com.ph/corporatepartners](http://www.meralco.com.ph/corporatepartners).**