

LEED Residential and LEED Interior Construction, which will more specifically address the needs of these industry sectors. Other sections will follow. In the meantime, the LEED Commercial Buildings system will serve well as a tool to help design teams make decisions.

The LEED Building Rating System is based on a series of prerequisites and criteria for various areas of the design. For criteria met, points are awarded reflecting the overall environmental impact of the various components of the building. Various levels of certification are awarded by the USGBC for point levels achieved. A fairly straightforward and user-friendly system to use, it has been designed specifically to help a team organize its decision-making process toward the goal of minimizing the overall environmental impact of a given building design. While LEED is probably not quite as accurate as the BEPAC and BREEM systems, it is likely to have a far greater impact on the environmental performance of buildings simply because it will be widely used. Moreover, it is a tool intended to be used in the design phase, helping to shape decisions, rather than just rating them after the fact.

**FIGURE 16-16**

In the Nidus Center for Scientific Enterprise, not only are the materials environmentally superior, but they are also on display for users and visitors. The Nidus Center was one of ten buildings to be awarded a LEED Rating during the USGBC's pilot program.



The rating system is generally performance-based rather than proscriptive. It encourages innovation and exploration of new ideas and solutions rather than relying on code minimums. A copy of the complete LEED Rating System as well as information about other resources can be found at <http://www.usgbc.org>.

### **Product Resources**

Designers have available a growing list of resources for material information, systems and technologies and other aspects affecting the interior design of buildings. Some of the best of these include the following:

#### ***Environmental Building News:***

***[http://ebn@www.buildinggreen.com](mailto:ebn@www.buildinggreen.com).***

- *Environmental Building News* is a very well researched and well written monthly newsletter concerning all aspects of building design. In addition, this organization produces a materials resource database and other educational materials. These include E Build and Green Spec. For the best use of this resource, subscribe to their services.

#### ***United States Green Building Council (USGBC):***

***<http://www.usgbc.org>.***

- The USGBC is a consensus-driven membership organization formed to promote environmentally responsible building. The organization is responsible for creating the LEED rating system. They have a growing list of educational resources as well as the LEED Green Building Rating System. Designers should seriously consider joining the USGBC.

#### ***Green Building Resource Center: <http://www.geonetwork.org>.***

- This is a web-based service with a wide variety of resources and links to other resources.

#### ***Environmental Protection Agency: <http://www.epa.gov>.***

- This website offers a great deal of information on indoor air quality, emissions, and other topics. Links are provided to many other additional resources.

#### ***AIA Environmental Resource Guide***

- A materials resource guide.