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COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES - A LABORATORY OF LOVE FOR LEED™

Sustainable design efforts create a great workspace with highly efficient, functional lab space. Project is first lab in Colorado to achieve LEED™ Silver rating from the USGBC.

Denver, Colorado, June 28, 2005 – The new Environmental Services Laboratory for Colorado Springs Utilities has achieved a LEED™ Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. Designed by RNL, the 45,000 square foot facility houses labs and offices for testing, quality control and compliance for the local water utility. The facility is an impressive example of architecture that integrates sustainability and meaningful design elements to create a healthy and pleasant workspace. Natural daylighting spills into a three-story light well that runs half the length of the 300-foot long axis. Material for the precast skin was locally acquired and manufactured, creating a face of natural beauty that provides structure and thermal protection.

The owner's mission is to provide healthy and reliable water, and the interior design is a metaphor of its purity. Symbols are incorporated throughout the interiors and finishes: Stacked patterns in the flooring tiles emulate aquifers; curved walls and glazing finishes replicate water flow; metal grillwork in the handrails represent filtration processes; and water bubble-inspired light diffusers hang over the light well, providing striking visual interest and a sense of scale to an area brings in daylight from three stories above.

"Sustainable design goals were analyzed in great detail to achieve a number of benefits", says RNL Associate Principal Tom Wuertz. "Daylighting creates healthier work environments and also results in wonderful architecture. And daylighting sensors help save energy, automatically turning lights off when they're not needed", Wuertz adds.

RNL's Director of Science and Technology, Philip Macey, served as RNL's in-house lab consultant and project architect. "Our experience in this particular kind of business helped us to combine functionality and quality workspace at a cost-effective price. We worked closely with the lab staff to make the functional requirements a seamless part of the design. That allows the lab workspace to be as inspiring and easy to be in as the office workspace", Macey says.

Built at a cost of \$11,500,000, the new facility unites operations that previously took place at two separate sites.

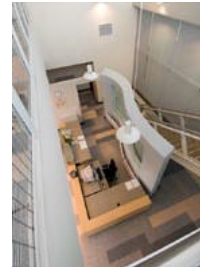


This removes duplicate functions, simplifies operations, and reduces overhead. The new building should meet Colorado Springs Utilities' needs for the next 10 years and beyond. The master plan provides flexibility for a 15,000 square foot addition that can take the facility to 2025. The facility houses several lab spaces including a clean room, a biosafety room, and chemistry, biology, microbiology, and fluoroscopy (cell counting) spaces. The facility also provides core and shell space to meet future lab needs as technology evolves.

RNL Design provided architecture, interior design, landscape design and entitlement services. Colorado Architectural Partnership provided construction documentation for the core and shell phase and also provided construction administration services. The project team also includes G.H. Phipps as the General Contractor; RMH as the mechanical/electrical/plumbing engineering and LEED consultant; HCDA for structural engineering; and Obering Worth as Civil Engineer.

RNL Design is an integrated full service architectural firm with offices in Denver, Los Angeles and Phoenix, serving clients locally, nationally and internationally. Since its inception in 1956, RNL has built its practice providing innovative design solutions to clients, surpassing their expectations and bringing ideas to life. RNL offers clients a continuum of design services, including architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture, and urban design and planning. For more information, please visit www.rnldesign.com.

Project photography is available – thumbnails of available graphics are shown below.



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