WELL Building Standard:  
A Template for Incremental Improvement of the Work Environment  
St. Louis Green Business Challenge  
April 12, 2017
A STANDARD BUILT FOR YOU

FLEXIBILITY FOR YOUR GOALS

After meeting the key requirements for baseline WELL Certification, you can select from a wide array of optional features to advance your individualized project priorities.

ALIGNMENT WITH LEED AND OTHER RATING SYSTEMS

WELL works with LEED, Green Star, BREEAM, and other globally-utilized rating systems to drive human and environmental sustainability.

VERIFIED PERFORMANCE

WELL projects complete third-party, onsite testing to ensure they’ve achieved key components of the WELL Building Standard. Performance verification is built into the WELL Certification process.

WIDESPREAD IMPACT

WELL is designed to reach 100% of the people in your building: not just through building design, construction and operations, but by positively impacting human behavior.
A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO HEALTH & WELL-BEING

WELL addresses 7 concepts

AIR
- WELL promotes strategies to reduce or minimize sources of indoor air pollution.

WATER
- WELL promotes high quality water and improved accessibility.

NOURISHMENT
- WELL limits the presence of unhealthy foods and can encourage better local culture.

LIGHT
- WELL promotes lighting systems designed to increase alertness, enhance experience, and promote sleep.

FITNESS
- WELL encourages the integration of exercise and fitness into everyday life.

COMFORT
- WELL optimizes cognitive and emotional health through design, technology, and treatment strategies.

MIND
- WELL encourages innovation by allowing projects to submit ideas for new features under WELL concepts.
WELL fosters a holistic formula for better health and wellness outcomes, leading to improvements in things like employee productivity, engagement and retention.

RANDY FISER
CSR, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS

The occupants of our building embrace the culture of health and wellness that WELL Certification has created. They are coming together to develop their own wellness activities and programs and banding together to participate in health fairs and host walk and talk meetings.

MARTHA MCINNIS,
DESIGN DIRECTOR, TD BANK GROUP

The way that buildings are designed, constructed and maintained impacts the way we sleep, what we eat, and how we feel. The WELL Building Standard uses innovative, research-backed strategies to advance health, happiness, mindfulness and productivity in our buildings and communities.
Our Green Business Challenge team identified the desire to align our challenge projects with our firm’s research interests. This enables us to gain understanding and expertise in a subject that is marketable to our clients while improving our own work environment.

Christner’s WELL team evaluated the 102 WELL features to identify which features were applicable to an occupied property & could be implemented as part of the 2016 Green Business Challenge innovation project.

We each took on 1-2 of the 7 concepts and individually decided which features we wanted to tackle. We then wrote a proposal for senior management that outlined our initiatives, the benefits, and costs. Senior management approved or tabled initiatives and provided funding.

Allowing each team member to identify the concepts that most interested them and the features they wanted to take on gave them ownership of the project and fostered a desire for success.
We want to ensure that the air we are breathing is as healthy as possible. Dirty air causes workplace absences and decreased productivity. Chemicals in cleaning products and pesticides can have long-term health consequences.

We requested and received MSDS sheets for all of the cleaning products & pesticides used in our building. We evaluated them to ensure they are Green-Seal Certified, as outlined in our lease agreement.

We evaluated our in-house cleaning products including hand soap, dish soap, dishwasher detergent, disinfecting wipe, and hand sanitizer. We made substitutions to the products purchased using the Environmental Work Group’s Guide to Healthy Cleaning Products & Skin Deep Cosmetics Database as guides.

Jossam home air quality test kits placed at two locations in our office allowed us to test the air. The test analyzed: total dust, mold spores, dander, carcinogenic fibers, pollen, and bacteria, and our results indicated no harmful contaminant levels.
The water we drink, the ice in our drinks, and the water we wash our hands with all have direct effects on our health. We want to ensure that the water in our offices is clean and safe.

Utilizing WaterSafe City Water Test kits at five locations in our office (kitchen sink, water dispenser, ice machine, and two restroom sinks) allowed us to test our water. The tests can identify presence and levels of lead, chlorine, nitrates/nitrites, bacteria, pesticides, hardness, and pH. The results showed that our water is good — no high lead, pesticide, chlorine, nitrate, nitrite, or bacteria levels. The tests did show that our water is hard and alkaline, but not unhealthy.

Christner’s staff feels very good knowing that our water is safe, especially within the ice machine!
We want to encourage mindful eating habits by providing Christner employees with healthier food choices, behavioral cues, and knowledge about nutrient quality.

As part of this effort, we replaced our kitchen’s frequently used plastic plates with glass plates. The reusable plastic plates were often mistaken for disposable, they were not microwave safe, and they easily were marred by cutlery. The new glass plates are BPA-free, safe to use in the microwave, and are not inadvertently thrown away.

Providing communal eating areas is also important to making healthier food choices. We reserved our large conference room during lunch once a week to encourage group lunches among Christner employees.

While the old, green plates were avoided, the new, glass plates are well used.

Our staff is in the habit of either eating at their desks or going out to eat lunch. We need to work more on encouraging healthy eating habits.
We want to promote illumination strategies that aim to minimize the disruption to the body’s circadian system, enhance productivity and provide appropriate visual acuity where needed.

As part of this effort, we are looking into the installation of Mecho shades throughout the Christner office. Mecho shades provide visually transparent shading, with excellent glare control, energy savings and reduction in solar gain.

At this time, senior leadership is reviewing a price quote for purchase of the manual Mecho shades.
Research has shown various potentials for improving fitness, but evolving research is showing how even small amounts of intense exercise have long-term benefits beyond caloric burn. This is in contrast to the typical belief that exercise was primarily for burning excess calories.

With this alternative fitness mind-set, we wanted to encourage Christner employees to take the stairs instead of the elevators. We installed signs at each of the stair locations within the office that identify the number of stairs per floor, calories burned per floor, total number of stairs, and total calories burned to quantify the results of taking the stairs. The signs also include quote such as, “stair walkers have stronger hearts,” to entice employees to take the stairs.

**LESSON LEARNED**
Signs are great reminders, but don’t do enough to encourage employees to use the stairs. Our corporate fitness challenge provides more incentives and reminders to staff about using the stairs instead of the elevators.
Flexibility in desk height will enable a less sedentary day at the office.

An existing initiative explored and evaluated various standing desk models. An office standard for standing desks was determined and are now available by request for employees to have installed. The flexible desks allow for standing and sitting throughout the work day increasing employee comfort.

Currently approximately 10% of Christner’s staff is utilizing sit-to-stand desks.

**LESSON LEARNED:**
Simply installing the sit-to-stand desks did not increase an employee’s daily activity level. Staff found that one key to actually using the stand feature is utilizing an app that reminds them when to stand and when to sit. Otherwise we get engrossed in our work and forget to move.
Inspired by Credit 86 of the WELL Standard - Post-Occupancy Survey – we issued a detailed survey to the entire office. The survey was based off of the Occupant Indoor Environment Quality Survey from the Center for the Built Environment at UC Berkeley and covers the following topics related to occupant satisfaction:

- Acoustics
- Thermal comfort
- Furniture and space layout
- Lighting
- Air quality
- Access to Amenities

48 employees responded to the survey; a 74% response rate! Survey results are being analyzed and used to inform prioritization of office improvements moving forward.
NEXT STEPS:

This year our goal will be to explore additional aspects of WELL for incorporation into the office environment

**Nourishment** – Catering Practices: build on previous year’s efforts by digging deeper into catered food brought onto the office, in effort to promote fruits and vegetables, reduce processed foods and artificial ingredients, and promote sustainable agriculture

**Fitness** – Christner Fitness Challenge

**Mind** – Explore biophilia and incorporating nature into our office surroundings