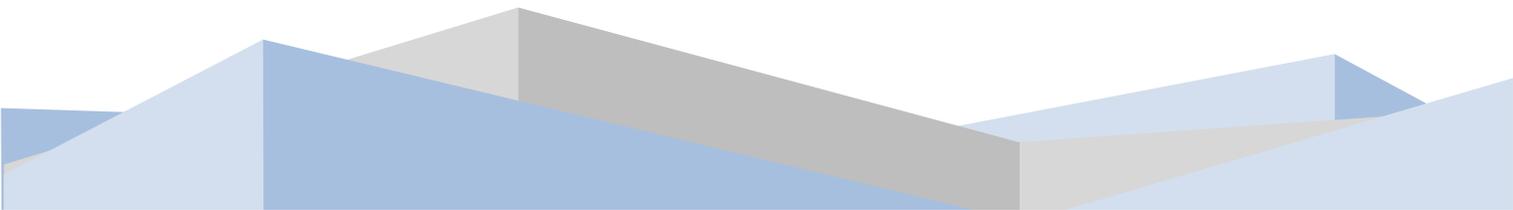


# **Golden Sands, Inc.**

## **Corporate Sustainability**

**Greenhouse Gas and Environmental Impact**

**Authored by: Above Green, LLC**



# Corporate Sustainability Report:

## Golden Sands General Contractors, Inc.

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Golden Sands is dedicated to sustainability. In 2010, we partnered with Above Green, LLC ([www.abovegreen.com](http://www.abovegreen.com)) to analyze our operating parameters and identify opportunities for improvement of our corporate environment. With our partners, we have recorded our carbon footprint using the World Resource Institute's Greenhouse Gas Protocol ([www.ghgprotocol.org](http://www.ghgprotocol.org)). Based on this record, we developed company-wide policies to (a) make our business operations more efficient, (b) guarantee our projects follow environmental standards, and (c) purchase carbon balanced business certificates to ensure that any emissions we do generate are off-set by supporting clean energy and other projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



Corporate Carbon Footprint (2010-2011)	
Source	Quantity
Corporate Transportation	152.39t CO2e
Purchased Electricity	221.855t CO2e
Employee Transportation	43.658t CO2e
<b>Total:</b>	<b>417.903t CO2e*</b>

*\*Golden Sands is a carbon neutral company. 100% of our carbon emissions are off-set on an annual basis by supporting clean energy and other projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*

### Overview

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Throughout the United States and abroad, climate change drives the establishment of codes and regulations set on reducing the environmental impact of business operations. Climate change has also led to record temperatures around the world, particularly within our operational locations in Texas and Florida. Golden Sands is aware of these trends in legislation and changes in physical climate, but legislation and climate trends are not our main drivers. Our main directive is an internal belief that *living and working as sustainably as possible is the right thing to do*. This belief in sustainable living is what has driven short and long term initiatives, including:



- Construction of our new corporate office building to LEED® Silver standards
- Establishment of a policy that says all corporate development projects must be LEED Certified and all client projects shall incorporate LEED Certification standards
- Use of Building Information Modeling (BIM) to understand project life-cycles
- Tracking of the mileage and average fuel cost for all vehicles in the fleet
- Replacement of our entire vehicle fleet with hybrid and highly efficient vehicles
- Installation of water-efficient flush and flow fixtures in all of our buildings
- Retrofitting of existing office spaces with geothermal and/or high SEER equipment
- Purchase of renewable energy certificates (RECs) for our office in Sealy, Texas
- Use of recycled, regional, and rapidly renewable materials on construction projects
- Implementation of corporate recycling programs at all of our office locations
- Implementation of construction waste recycling programs at all of our job sites

- Employment of indoor air quality procedures during construction and before occupancy
- Use of non-toxic and low-VOC materials in all of our new and existing buildings
- Encouragement of teleconferencing instead of in-person meetings to reduce transport
- Calculation, analysis, and mitigation of the carbon footprint for our corporate operations, development projects, and client services (we are a carbon neutral company)



*These elements of our CSR plan are linked to our commitment to reducing our environmental impact. For instance, in the area of transportation, we have gone from an average fuel economy of 8 mpg to 25-40 mpg for 17 of the 30 vehicles in our fleet. Given the fact that in 2010 we drove more than 254,000, this fourfold improvement in fuel economy has a considerable impact. This is just one example of how we are improving the operational efficiency in order to reach our goal of becoming carbon positive.*

## The Competitive Landscape

At Golden Sands, we understand that having the ability to provide clients with services that are sensitive to sustainability requirements is now a normal part of the global business environment. Every serious competitive business must have the capability to deliver environmental quality projects. What separates us from the competition is that we not only provide services for others, but we also take it upon ourselves to practice what we preach. Our own buildings are built to LEED standards, and we off-set 100% of our carbon emissions by supporting clean energy projects. We consider ‘carbon neutral’ to be the new ‘normal’. In the coming years, we will strive to raise the bar and become increasingly ‘carbon positive’. Instead of having a neutral impact, we will give back and have a positive impact on the environment.

## Investments in Sustainability

Our company has made a number of capital improvements to existing facilities, including: installation of CFL light bulbs in all fixtures, upgrading AC systems to high SEER equipment, purchase of hybrid and/or fuel efficient vehicles, and construction of our new office building to LEED Silver standards. Economic return on investment is just but one reason why we are implementing sustainability initiatives at the company. The following chart identifies the approximate amounts spent on sustainability initiatives from 2010-2011.

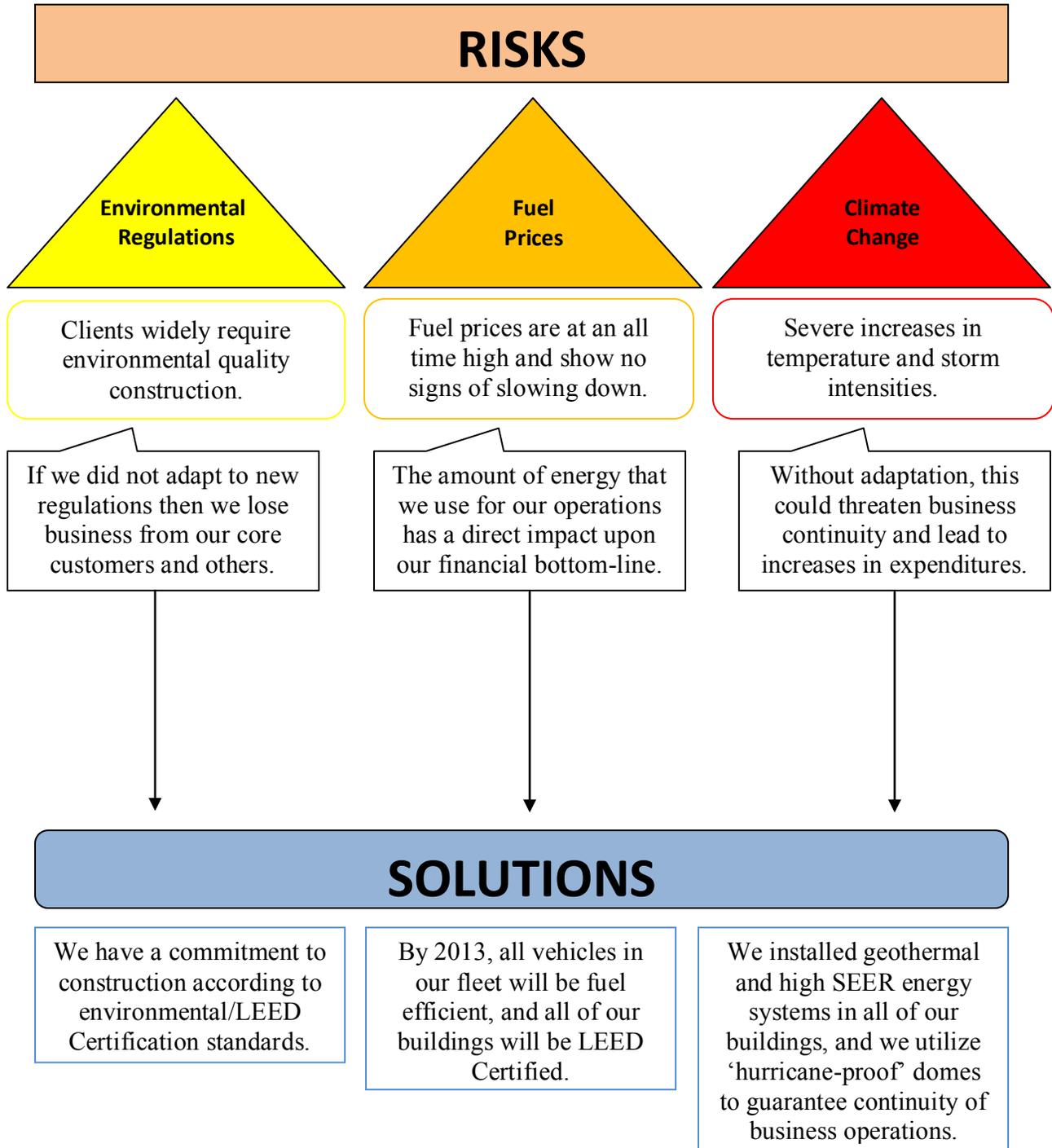


Activity Type	Description of Activity	Investment	Savings	Payback
Energy Efficient Building	LEED Silver Certified Office	\$220,000	\$25,700/year	8.5 years
Equipment Upgrades	High Efficiency Equipment	\$116,118	\$15,200/year	7.5 years
Low Carbon Energy	Off-set 100% CO2 Emissions	\$5,484	-	*
Transportation Upgrades	Fuel Efficient Vehicle Fleet	\$141,393	\$36,716/year	4 years

**\*The payback for this investment is recognized in terms of environmental and social benefits.**

## Climate Change: Risks and Solutions

There are many business risks posed by climate change, including those driven by changes in regulation, physical climate, and other climate-related developments. These risks have the potential to affect our ability to do business, increase our operational costs, and disrupt production capabilities. We have identified four of the most imminent risks to the sustainability of our business. In the process of adapting our business to avoid risks for ourselves, we have developed new capabilities that add-value to our service offerings. Essentially, we have transformed risks into opportunities. The following chart illustrates our transformation:



## Other Environmental Initiatives

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Golden Sands is taking a holistic approach to sustainability. Beyond calculation of our carbon footprint, Golden Sands has assessed its environmental impact in terms of sites, water, energy, materials, air quality, and education. We are currently implementing the following initiatives:



### Sustainable Sites

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- Commitment to non-toxic building exterior and hardscape management
- Development of integrated pest management, erosion control, and landscape management
- Consideration of urban density and connectivity factors for new development projects
- Sensitivity to the impact that site development has upon the natural environment, including maximization of ‘green space’, and re-planting of native vegetation
- Encouragement of use of fuel efficient vehicles and carpooling among all employees
- Commitment to using low solar reflectance index (SRI) materials for all jobs requiring hardscape and roof installation, in order to reduce heat island effects
- Installation of automatic timers on interior lights, and use of night-sky friendly exterior lighting solutions, both to minimize night-sky pollution



### Water Efficiency

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- Use of only water efficient flush and flow fixtures on new development projects
- Metering and sub-metering of indoor plumbing fixture and fitting efficiency
- Minimization of potable water for irrigation purposes on sites with landscaping



### Energy & Atmosphere

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- Commitment to ENERGY STAR and LEED Certification requirements, including bringing existing buildings to at least the 21<sup>st</sup> percentile above national median, and all new construction must be at least 15% more efficient than its baseline counterpart
- System-level metering of energy systems for greater performance measurement
- Use of ‘commissioning’ to ensure energy systems are installed and function properly
- Purchase of ‘green power’ or renewable energy certificates for purchased electricity
- Use of equipment with low Ozone Depleting and Global Warming Potentials



### Materials and Resources

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- Storage and collection of recyclable materials at all corporate office buildings

- Commitment to recycling at least 50% of all waste due to construction processes
- Commitment to maximizing use of recycled, regional, and rapidly renewable materials
- Development of a sustainable purchasing policy for: ongoing consumables; durable goods; facility alterations and additions; reduced mercury in lamps; and food products
- Development of a solid waste management policy for: ongoing consumables; durable goods; and waste due to facility alterations and additions



### Indoor Environmental Quality

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- Implementation of green cleaning processes at all managed facilities, including: auditing of custodial effectiveness; purchase of sustainable cleaning products, materials, and equipment; indoor chemical and pollutant source control; and indoor (non-toxic) integrated pest management
- Incorporation of indoor air quality best management practices in terms of: outdoor air delivery monitoring; increased ventilation; reduction of particulates in air distribution; protection of ducts and use of MERV8 filtration media during construction; test of air quality and use of MERV13 filtration media after construction
- Exclusive purchase of non-toxic, low-emitting materials for: paints and coatings; adhesives and sealants; carpet systems; flooring systems; and composite wood and agrifiber products



### Education and Awareness

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- Golden Sands has developed a comprehensive education program for its employees and visitors to its LEED Certified facilities. This education program is designed to educate participants about Golden Sands' corporate sustainability initiatives.
- Beginning in FY2012, Golden Sands will require that primary suppliers provide their own Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) report as a precursor to sales. This CSR report should detail, at a minimum: (a) the carbon footprint of the organization (Source 2 reporting, at least); (b) the steps taken to minimize and/or off-set this footprint; and (c) other environmental initiatives that are being undertaken. All other (non-primary) suppliers will be required to submit data sheets that describe the environmental properties of their products, particularly properties that pertain to LEED Certification requirements.
- Additionally during FY2010, Golden Sands will begin to measure the environmental impact of each construction job. Tracking methodologies have been put in place to assess the corporate transportation and purchased electricity attributable to each job. The aim of this per-job footprint measurement is to identify opportunities to improve the efficiency of work performance.

## Additional Information

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This Carbon Disclosure Project Report was created by Above Green, LLC. All data has been analyzed and verified by a third-party. If you have questions about this report, or wish to receive additional information about Golden Sands Corporate Social Responsibility program(s), contact:

Vincent Bataoel, LEED AP  
Owner, Above Green, LLC  
Post Office Box 886  
Middleburg, VA 20118  
[www.abovegreen.com](http://www.abovegreen.com)  
708-715-1808 (Phone)  
vincent@abovegreen.com



## Corporate Contacts

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For additional information about Golden Sands, contact:

Mary Maguire  
President, Golden Sands, Inc.  
2500 NW 39<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, FL 33142  
[www.gsands.net](http://www.gsands.net)  
305-633-3336 (Phone)  
mmaguire@gsands.net

