

Q: How does the SE 2050 Commitment relate to the SE 2050 Challenge?

A: The SE 2050 Commitment is the Structural Engineering Institute's response to the SE 2050 Challenge that was issued by the Carbon Leadership Forum in the Summer of 2019.

Q: I signed the SE 2050 Challenge, why don't I see my name or my firm's name here? Do I need to sign up again?

A: Yes. The SE 2050 Commitment is separate from the Challenge sign up.

Q: Why focus on structure?

A: Structure typically represents about half of the embodied carbon in a building project. Choices by the structural engineer can reduce the embodied carbon significantly. Furthermore, there is less variety in the basic materials in the structural portion of most buildings, making structure a good starting point for building out a database and testing its usability and usefulness before expanding to other materials. Structural engineers have not been viewed as an essential member of the green building team on most projects. This is something that needs to change if we are to reach carbon emissions reduction targets.

Q: What incentive will there be for structural engineering firms, especially small firms, to invest their time/resources to this?

A: This is a call to elevate the profession of structural engineering, which has historically not had a large role in sustainable design. Several green building programs and codes, such as LEED, Living Building Challenge, ASHRAE 189.1, IgCC, and CalGreen, have introduced voluntary embodied carbon (or broader LCA) measures that invite structural engineers to join the green building movement. Participation in this Commitment Program will help firms perform the embodied carbon or LCA calculations that may soon be asked of them due to these green building programs or codes. See the Join the Movement page for information regarding the levels of commitment and minimum amount of project data required to be part of the Commitment Program.