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It's rainwater to the rescue if fire sprinkler is needed at 'green' Lee's Summit middle school

By DONALD BRADLEY
The Kansas City Star

The hope is that it will never be used, but if ... just if ... the fire sprinkler is ever needed at the new Raymore-Peculiar East Middle School, rainwater will spray from the ceiling.

The school is "green." And it's probably the first middle school in Missouri to be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified.

The designation means that construction, operation and maintenance all meet standards of energy efficiency and natural resources.

That rainwater for the sprinkler system will be captured by a "butterfly roof." Some water will irrigate the grounds. Recycled materials are being used in construction of the \$33 million building — and coming from a regional boundary to cut down on transportation costs.

The plan also calls for geothermal heating and cooling, bioswales, some solar power, a windmill and retention pond.

"To our knowledge, this will be the first LEED silver middle school in the state of Missouri," said Jay Harris, the district's superintendent for management services.

The school is going up on Missouri 58 about a mile west of Missouri 291. Exterior construction is about 75 percent complete. When finished, it will serve about 1,000 seventh- and eighth-graders.

It is set to open in the fall of 2010.

"You can already see where the butterfly roof form will be and how the split level of the 2-story classroom wing takes advantage of the slope of the site," said project architect Shannon Pollard of Hollis + Miller Architects.

"The district has been wonderful to work with, and it is great to see them embrace the LEED concepts and really want to use the building as a learning tool so the students will know how the building ... uses sustainable principles to make their environment better every day."

Some of the "green" components, such as the windmill, will be used more for education than practical effect. But it could provide enough juice to power some outdoor lighting.

LEED was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council and provides a framework for energy conservation.

The designation means a new building was designed and built to reduce CO2 emissions and improve energy savings, water efficiency and indoor environmental quality.

LEED buildings do cost more to construct.

"The savings will come later," Harris said.



Architects envision this as the south entrance of the new Raymore-Peculiar East Middle School

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RAYMORE-PECULIAR DISTRICT

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