

Building at 425 Park Commits to Becoming First WELL-Certified Tower in NYC

BY DANIELLE SCHLANGER | MARCH 12, 2015 | COMMERCIAL OBSERVER

You've heard of LEED Certification. Now, meet WELL Certification.

The WELL Building Standard is the first building certification to focus on enhancing people's health and well-being through the built environment. And L&L Holding today announced that its commercial property at 425 Park Avenue in the Plaza District will be the first WELL-certified office tower in New York City.

The Norman Foster-designed property, between East 55th and East 56th Streets will adhere to these standards, which was created in collaborating with doctors, scientists and real estate professionals. The designation aims to create built environments that include quality air, water and light to better the health and wellness of tenants.

David Levinson, the chairman and chief executive officer of L&L Holding, said a fundamental idea behind 425 Park Avenue was to make a 21st century office building and work environment.

"This is an opportunity for us to develop a building that will be unique because of all these 21st century characteristics," he said. "It's really embedded in all of our thinking."

L&L Holding is expected to begin demolition of the current 425 Park Avenue building on May 1, with the new property set to open in 2018. Once the building is complete, the International WELL Building Institute, which issues the certification, will conduct tests and inspections to ensure the property meets WELL Standards.

Some of the measures taken by L&L Holding to ensure maximized health and wellness for tenants at the 893-foot, 47-story tower include air filtration, advanced water purification, a dedicated wellness center and terraces on high floors with Central Park views that will serve as common space.

Mr. Levinson said tenants will enjoy the tremendous amount of sunlight that will enter the building, very healthy food and meditation at the space.

"This is how people will be working in the 21st century," he said.

In a prepared statement, CBRE's Mary Ann Tighe called L&L Holding's "enlightened approach" to development a smart business move.

"Today's leading financial and creative companies recognize the nexus between employee satisfaction and productivity and are increasingly demanding that the physical spaces they inhabit incorporate these values," she said.

There is currently only one WELL certified office building in the country (in Los Angeles), though many office buildings are attempting to obtain certification. The International WELL Building Institute, the company which administers the WELL Building Standard, also helps residential, hospitality, mixed-use and health care properties, become more healthful for tenants.

"IWBI's mission is to bring human health to the forefront of building practices globally, and we are thrilled that L&L Holding has committed to pursue WELL Certification for 425 Park Avenue in an effort improve the health and well-being of their future tenants," said Paul Scialla, the founder of the International WELL Building Institute, via a spokeswoman.