

Press Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Structural Building Component Industry Submits Comments on LEED Forest Certification Benchmarks

Madison, WI – The structural building components industry submitted comments this week regarding forest certification benchmarks and certified wood credit language for the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) second Public Comment Period. If approved, the revisions will apply to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) 2009 green building rating system, also known as LEED v3.

The USGBC public comment period marks a step forward for component manufacturers who want to help their customers build green by supplying components made with certified wood. When USGBC developed its LEED rating system in 2000, it identified the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as the sole forest certification program to earn LEED credit. This meant that component manufacturers had to use wood exclusively from FSC-certified forests in order for components to contribute credits toward LEED certification. USGBC has been criticized by members of the forest products industry who believe that a broader consensus-based approach that includes other types of certified wood is more appropriate. In response to this criticism, USGBC recently decided to accept other forest certification programs for LEED credit.

WTCA Executive Director Kirk Grundahl said ideally, green building rating systems such as LEED would not mandate the use of *any* certified wood to earn credit—and instead credit the fact that engineered components are green building materials. “The 1998 National Resource Defense Council handbook states that our Framing the American Dream project proved components easily fall within their definition of being a ‘Green Enterprise,’” he said. “We believe that the SBC industry has been leading the green movement since 1952.” However, the elimination of an FSC monopoly within the LEED forest certification program makes it easier for component manufacturers to participate in green building, he said.

USGBC will use its Forest Certification Benchmark as a measuring stick to determine the forest certification systems that will qualify for LEED credit. WTCA submitted comments in favor of it, aiming to give component manufacturers the option of supplying SFI-, CSA-, AFS- or PEFC-built components for credit under LEED v3. WTCA also submitted comments on LEED Certified Wood Credit Language Revisions. The proposed revisions reflect the elimination of FSC-specific language in the rating systems, which WTCA also voted in favor of.

Visit www.sbcindustry.com/green/greenbuild.php for the most current information about LEED, NRDC and WTCA's Framing the American Dream.

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WTCA – Representing the Structural Building Components Industry is an international not-for-profit trade association of structural building component manufacturers. Formerly the Wood Truss Council of America, WTCA evolved its name in March 2006 to more accurately reflect the work of the association and its membership. Currently, WTCA has 790 component manufacturer members, 35 chapters, and nearly 300 supplier and related services members seeking to protect and expand the markets for the products they manufacture.