

The Masonry Society

Sustainability E-News

December 31, 2011

Volume 3, Number 24

SPONSORED EDITION

From the Editor

As one year ends and a new one begins, our thoughts often turn to goals for the new year. Whether you call them goals, resolutions, or something else, I hope one of them is to keep informed and educated on the issues in the area of sustainable building design and construction – and that *Sustainability E-News* has become a resource you can rely on. THANK YOU to our 2012 Sponsors! It's not too late to pledge your support (we're not yet fully funded). Please [contact the TMS office](#) for more information.

This edition contains several links to articles that remind us “the jury is still out” on many elements of sustainability. From the conflicting reports on the effectiveness of carbon sequestration to the need for it at all, to new, but unproven green products, there is plenty of room for discussion on how best to provide high performing buildings while being responsible stewards of our environment. We hope to provide you with a variety of “food for thought” for the new year.

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NOTE: Inclusion in this newsletter is not an endorsement of the products and materials featured, nor have these products been evaluated by TMS or the editor. Furthermore, the views expressed in the articles featured are those of the article authors.

GREEN BUILDING NEWS

The Portland Cement Association is not alone in their promotion of the value of resilient buildings. The article below touts the benefits of better design. Also below, a link to a new tool for dealing with LEED. I'm not sure how well it works – let me know if you've tried it. ~Tina

Building Green Is No Longer Enough, It is Time To Build Resilient

It turns out that many of the strategies needed to achieve resilience--such as really well-insulated homes that will keep their occupants safe if the power goes out or interruptions in heating fuel occur--are exactly the same strategies we have for green building. [Read more.](#)

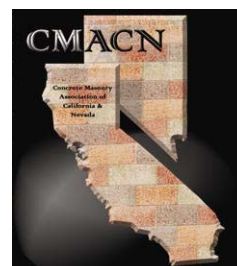
One Way to Determine Most Effective LEED Credits

GreenWizard is a cloud-based solution to enhance product management and information-sharing by making it easier to choose materials to optimize LEED credits. Architects, engineers and contractors can use the tool to "model multiple LEED credit design assessments for any one

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project, save them, and compare them to see which one creates the ideal balance between cost, site-specific design, and the clients' objectives" according to [this ConstrucTech article](#).

Building the Case for Global Standards for BIM

Collaborative efforts among Georgia Institute of Technology's Digital Building Lab and the American Concrete Institute, the Precast Concrete Institute, and the American Institute of Steel Construction could lead to the development of global standards for the use of building information models by the architecture, engineering and construction industries. About \$15.8 billion is lost in deficient data exchange during information transfers, according to a report by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which Chuck Eastman, director of Georgia Tech's Digital Building Lab, says hampers wider acceptance of BIM in this [AZoBuild article](#).

DOE Finds that ASHRAE Standard Cuts Energy Use by 18.5%

Recent analysis by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) shows that buildings meeting a 2010 energy efficiency standard will use 18.5 percent less energy than those using the 2007 version of the standard, helping commercial building owners cut operating costs, according to [this article](#).

Zoning Changes Begin Public Review

The City Planning Commission's proposal to amend New York City's zoning rules to make it easier for buildings to incorporate energy-efficient and sustainable additions such as solar panels, storm-water detention systems, skylights, wind turbines and wall insulation, began a public review process.

"This is the most comprehensive citywide initiative dealing with energy efficiency and green building in the U.S.," said Amanda Burden, chairwoman of the City Planning Commission in this [Crain's New York Business](#) article.

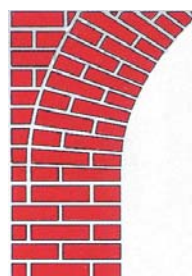
Ohio Tops Nation in Sustainable School Construction

Ohio tops the "Best of Green Schools list" from the U.S. Green Building Council for having the highest number of environment-friendly school construction projects. Ohio has 315 schools that are LEED-registered or certified. Read more in this [Dayton Daily News article](#).

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CLIMATE NEWS

Lots of controversy in the links below which are provided to give you an idea of the diversity of views. As a reminder, TMS does not support or endorse the views or products featured in these articles. ~Tina

Carbon Capture Initiatives are Unrealistic, Uneconomical

A research study spearheaded by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology details the challenges of using carbon extraction systems, such as air filters and chemicals, to capture greenhouse gases, according to this [ScientificAmerican article](#). The study found that such methods are "resource-intensive" and inordinately expensive, considering the amount of air that needs to be purified. "We're not saying it's infeasible to take CO2 out of the air; we're asking if this is an economic way to mitigate climate change, and here we're very clear it's not," said Howard Herzog, a senior research engineer at the MIT's Energy Initiative and one of the report's authors.

Carbon Capture, Storage Efficient for Emissions Reduction

Carbon capture and underground storage of greenhouse gases are safe techniques for reducing emissions, according to a group of international scientists. The researchers noted the efficiency of the process through trapping the toxic emissions for "over thousands, even millions of years," writes Gordon Hamilton. "Setting up this experiment, we were able to test our ability to understand residual gas saturation, which is an important trapping mechanism," said Dirk Kirske, Simon Fraser University groundwater specialist in this [Vancouver Sun article](#).

Stoking the Climate-Change Fires

Not everyone agrees that climate change is due to human causes. [Click here](#) to read more on this viewpoint.

EDUCATION

Wisconsin Masonry Alliance Hosts Sustainability Seminars

The Wisconsin Masonry Alliance announces their 2012 Symposium Series featuring The Masonry Society's "The Role of Masonry in Sustainable Design" seminar. Choose your location! Green Bay on Feb. 14, Wisconsin Dells on Feb. 15, and Waukesha on Feb. 16. [Click Here for More](#)

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Sustainability and LEED is Education Focus of ICON EXPO and NCMA CPU

The Precast Show taking place in Orlando, Fla., March 1-3, 2012 will include ICON EXPO and NCMA CPU education programs. Sustainability is the focus of several of the education programs, including a session on the Introduction to Green Building and the International Green Building Code. For a tentative schedule, please [click here](#).

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