

The Masonry Society

Sustainability E-News

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SPONSORED EDITION

From the Editor

Just when you thought you had a handle on all things “green” along comes something new. This time it is health product declarations for building products. Like environmental product declarations (EPDs), health product declarations provide information on building product ingredients and related health hazards. While this is the first time I’ve seen this, it isn’t surprising. Product information reporting is certain to grow rapidly over the next few years. What steps has your company taken toward providing EPDs and the like? I’d love to hear your stories.

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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

This month features articles at both ends of the spectrum; from a Canadian province just beginning to tackle LEED projects to zero-energy buildings. This is consistent with what I’ve found as I travel the country – as widespread as green building is, it’s not spread evenly. ~Tina

How Sustainable Construction Affects Profitability

The profitability of buildings in the commercial market is related to whether they are perceived as Class A, B or C buildings, according to the Building Owners and Managers Association. Class A’s are the third-party-certified green buildings and are most sought after. “Green building is fundamentally altering real estate market dynamics -- the nature of the product demanded by tenants, constructed by developers, required by governments and favored by capital providers,” according to RREEF Research. Read more at Forbes.com (a limited access site).

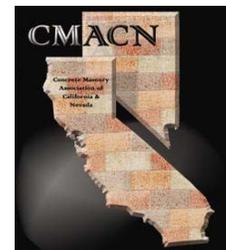
Green Building Experts Must Look at 6 Mitigation Categories

Climate change should prompt building professionals to focus on six areas, including heating, cooling and lighting as well as water and waste, to determine environmental changes and mitigate the effects on existing buildings and future construction, according to a study by the U.S. Green Building Council and experts at the University of Michigan. “The next step is to understand the impact of climate change on the built environment and to incorporate appropriate adaptation strategies into green building practice so that the

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environments we design, build, and manage today will be suitable for a range of uncertain futures," according to [this article](#).

Green Building Challenges Canadian Province

Green building practices are gaining popularity in Newfoundland, Canada, as some commercial buildings adopt sustainable design and energy-efficient features. However, sustainable construction may meet challenges in the region due to high costs and complex paperwork associated with LEED registration and a lack of building materials manufactured locally, according to this [Daily Commercial News article](#).

Futuristic Green Office Building Is a Sign of Things to Come

Currently rising from a pit in downtown Seattle, the \$30 million, six-story "living building" was created by Denis Hayes and Jason McLennan. The two are confident that they can save the world one building at a time. [Click here](#) to read more.

Zero-Energy Commercial Buildings on the Rise

The number of zero-energy commercial buildings and zero-energy-capable commercial buildings is on the rise across the U.S., according to [this article in Eco-Structure](#).

PRODUCT NEWS

Transparency is vital to green product claims, which is why the new Home Depot database is so disappointing. After trying unsuccessfully to find criteria for inclusion on the website, I contacted Home Depot directly. Unfortunately, they wouldn't provide any information on how products were selected. So for the moment, I'm left feeling the website is little more than marketing. -Tina

USGBC, Home Depot Launch Green Product Database

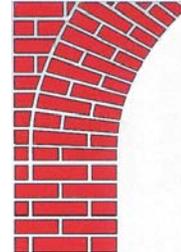
The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), in conjunction with The Home Depot, has launched an [online green home products database](#). The database, leed.homedepot.com is a special microsite within homedepot.com that features products geared toward green home building, many of which may contribute towards earning LEED points and prerequisites for the LEED for Homes program, making it easier for homeowners and builders to find the products they need.

LCAs, EPDs, and CSRs are a Great Start - But What About Health?

At BuildingGreen, they're excited about the rise of the product transparency movement but also concerned about



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the limitations of the environmental product declaration (EPD) framework. So they're even more excited about the emerging health product declaration (HPD) open standard--a voluntary format for reporting building product ingredients and related health hazards--and to announce the next step in the HPD's development. [Read more.](#)

Are BioBased Materials As Good As We Think?

From GreenSpec.com - It still seems like biobased materials should be better for the environment. Even after the LEED Wood Wars, even after all the stories of pollution and waste from industrial agriculture, it just seems logical that resources we grow as part of a natural cycle are greener than the ones we mine or extract. But is that the true picture? [Read more.](#)

CODES and RATING SYSTEMS

The masonry industry isn't the only industry concerned with the inclusion of LCA tools in green rating systems. Check out the link below on concerns that the forest industry has. -Tina

IgCC: What Now?

This month, the final version on the International Green Construction Code (IgCC) is scheduled to be published, ending over two years of dedicated work by volunteer stakeholders. But many questions still remain as to how the IgCC will be implemented and to what extent it is supported by local code officials. [This article](#) discusses how the green code will fit into the work already being done to promote green building by groups such as the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), Green Building Initiative (GBI), and ASHRAE, among others.

Forestry Group Opposes Use of Life-cycle Tools in Green Rating

The carbon consumption of a building product from cradle to grave can be measured with life-cycle assessment tools -- but different tools produce different results. A LEED 2012 standard to provide points for using LCA tools is therefore a step backward from the current Certified Wood Credit, according to [this article](#).

You Can Suggest LEED Pilot Credits

Did you know that every USGBC member can suggest one new pilot credit? If not it is a great opportunity to use in favor of masonry! Pilot credits are put to test and based on the outcome, the USGBC considers including them in the LEED Rating Systems. Every member can suggest one new pilot credit at

<http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/Pilot/PilotCreditApplication.aspx>.

From the existing pilot credits it looks like masonry manufacturers may benefit from exploring Pilot Credits 1, 2, 11, 21, 43, 52, 53, and 54.

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EDUCATION

The Role of Masonry in Sustainable Design and LEED™

Arizona Masonry Guild will host this popular seminar from The Masonry Society on April 19, 2012 from 10:15am – 11:45am, as well as several others related to sustainability as part of their Masonry U. [Click here for more information.](#)

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