



The Industry Voice for Workplace Solutions

news release

For Immediate Release
August 11, 2006

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**USGBC Approves BIFMA Furniture Emissions Standards
Furniture Manufacturers Association Develops Option C
for LEED® Commercial Interiors EQ 4.5 Credit**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has approved a third alternative in its LEED for Commercial Interiors EQ 4.5 low-emitting furniture credit. Called Option C, it is based on the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA) Furniture Emissions Standards for office furniture systems and seating products.

USGBC applauded the move and noted that the BIFMA Furniture Emissions Standards will improve indoor air quality and increase the use of sustainable materials for existing and future commercial construction.

The BIFMA Furniture Emissions Standards are the result of over 10 years of development that included the contributions of the U.S. General Services Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the State of California, Berkeley Analytical Associates, the National Research Council of Canada, and many other stakeholders. BIFMA also partnered with Dr. Jianshun Zhang of Syracuse University – a leading scientist in the field of emissions chamber testing with over 20 years experience in building ventilation and indoor air quality research.

Tom Reardon, executive director of BIFMA, notes that indoor air quality continues to be a concern to customers as well as manufacturers. “BIFMA’s goal in developing these

standards was to provide a consistent and transparent process for testing, measuring, and determining conformance for furniture emissions,” he says.

The BIFMA Furniture Emissions Standards include the BIFMA M7.1-2005 test method and the BIFMA X7.1-2005 conformance standard. As an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited standards developer, BIFMA does not certify products and does not test products for compliance; it develops consensus-based standards open to architects, designers, laboratories, scientists, researchers, manufacturers, and government agencies.

As a result, Option C as an alternative path for achieving the LEED-CI EQ 4.5 credit opens testing and certification to multiple qualified labs and certification bodies throughout North America. Option C facilitates more accessible indoor air quality testing and validation. It also allows customers, architects, designers, and manufacturers to select which option is most suitable to them.

Established in 1973, BIFMA International is a not-for-profit trade association of furniture manufacturers and suppliers addressing issues of common concern. The association's membership of over 260 companies represents over 80% of the value of North American shipments of office furniture. BIFMA's mission is to serve the North American office and business furniture manufacturing industry as an information resource, industry advocate and by offering professional and industry-wide trade development opportunities. It provides an effective forum for cooperation and collaboration for the promotion of the industry. Strategic areas of focus include standards development, statistical data generation, government relations, industry promotion, education, networking and trade development activities. Additional information is available at www.bifma.org.

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