



The Industry Voice for Workplace Solutions

news release

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Furniture Sustainability Standard Released for Consensus Vote and Public Comment

Grand Rapids, MI & Ann Arbor, MI - The Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA) International and NSF International (NSF) announce the release of BIFMA E3-2008 Business and Institutional Furniture Sustainability Standard to the NSF consensus ballot process and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) public comment period.

BIFMA and NSF partnered on the development of this standard over a year ago gathering a broad and diverse group of stakeholders in the consensus process. ANSI mandates openness, balance, due process, consensus and a right to appeal in the development of consensus standards. Representatives from academia, the A&D community, end users, regulatory agencies, federal and state government, certification bodies, non-governmental organizations, manufacturers, suppliers and others have been engaged in development of the standard.

“By employing this open and balanced consensus process, we’ve ensured that a broad range of perspectives have been considered in this standard,” said Thomas Reardon, BIFMA’s Executive Director. “I applaud the dozens of individuals who have lent their time, talents and knowledge to the creation of this important standard that will guide the development of more sustainable furniture products and processes going forward,” he added.

BIFMA E-3 2008 takes a holistic view in evaluating product sustainability, considering multiple attributes including materials and natural resource utilization, energy, renewable energy, greenhouse gas impacts, human and eco-system health, material toxicity, and social responsibility. Modeled after the LEED building rating system, furniture products are evaluated against a variety of credit criteria (after first meeting certain prerequisites), accumulating points toward increasing levels of recognition associated with reduced environmental impact.

Following two years of development, the standard is now entering the official NSF consensus body vote and an open, ANSI public comment period to last 45 days. The balanced consensus body responsible for the standard will consider all input received during this period. Interested parties are invited to review the standard and provide comment by visiting:

http://standards.nsf.org/apps/group_public/document.php?document_id=1626&wg_abbrev

“Once this standard completes the ANSI standards development process and becomes an American National Standard, it will not only help furniture manufacturers demonstrate their commitment to the environment, it will also help consumers understand the sustainable benefits of the furniture,” said Jane Wilson, NSF Director of Standards.

Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA)

Established in 1973, the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA) International (www.bifma.org) is a not-for-profit organization that provides a forum for members to cooperate and collaborate on appropriate industry issues. We develop product and industry standards that support safe, healthy and sustainable environments; publish key industry statistics; advocate for legislation and government regulation that have a direct impact on the industry; and facilitate meaningful dialog and education between manufacturers and their customers.

NSF International

NSF International, an independent, not-for-profit organization helps protect you by certifying products and writing standards for food, water and consumer goods (www.nsf.org). Founded in 1944, NSF is committed to protecting public health and safety worldwide. NSF is a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Food and Water Safety and Indoor Environment and an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited standards developer. Additional services include safety audits for the food and water industries, management systems registrations delivered through NSF International Strategic Registrations, organic certification provided by Quality Assurance International and education through the NSF Center for Public Health Education.

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