

March 16 , 2009

LEED, BREEAM and Green Star to collaborate

U.S. Green Building Council - March 3

The world's three leading green building rating systems – the United Kingdom's BREEAM, the U.S's LEED and Australia's Green Star – recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together on developing common metrics to measure emissions of CO2 equivalents from new homes and buildings. Presently, the three systems use different methods to measure the environmental impact of buildings.

Green Building Focus

Webcor & Navitas host green building materials forum

Webcor - March 9

Webcor Builders, the second largest green contractor in the US, and Navitas Capital, a venture capital firm focused on sustainable green building materials and technologies, hosted a high-level executive forum to lay the groundwork for the next stage of the built environment. Leading owners, developers, architects, engineers and advanced building materials companies were in attendance and exchanged ideas regarding how innovative building materials can improve the portfolio value of existing buildings and how advanced technologies and materials could transform the next generation of construction projects.

\$53B in green building materials sold in 2008

Trans World News - March 6

According to a study by The Freedonia Group, the US market for “green” building materials generated sales of almost \$57 billion in 2008. The green materials market is projected to expand 7.2% annually to over \$80 billion in 2013, outpacing the growth of building construction expenditures over the same period. Although green building materials are expected to account for an increasing share of materials used, growth will be driven primarily by the recovery of the residential market through 2013 as it rises from its depressed 2008 levels.

Experts reject NAIOP study

CoStar Group - March 6

A study prepared by ConSol and commissioned by NAIOP challenges the economic feasibility of achieving certain energy efficiency targets in buildings. Using energy models, the study concludes that achieving 30% energy reductions over code would place an undue financial burden on developers. The study is drawing sharp criticism from experts in the energy efficiency, real estate, design and engineering fields. Many professionals believe the study's findings contradict a growing body of evidence to the contrary based on the performance of many buildings that have achieved energy efficiency improvements of 30% or greater with negligible or no cost premiums.

Green design Blog launched

Hotels - March 2

After years of working with Fortune 500 companies to promote sustainability in the buildings, green designer Mark Johnson — FAIA, NKBA Educator, consultant, residential architect and certified kitchen designer — is taking his message to the blogosphere. Johnson, principal of design and building consulting firm MARKITECT, will launch the [GreenDesignGuide blog](#) as a new feature of online architecture, engineering and construction portal AEC Daily. The blog's goal is to connect design professionals with sustainable design resources and generate discussions to further the green construction movement.

Green-building market recession-proof?

The green building industry has risen on the tide of a culture-wide trend toward sustainability, and many in the process believe it will continue to prosper even as the U.S. falls deeper into a recession. A recent Turner Construction Company Survey confirms this trend: 75% of more than 750 real estate executives surveyed said the credit crunch would not make them any less likely to construct green buildings in the future. Moreover, a 2009 report by McGraw-Hill Construction found that the green-building market "seems to be somewhat insulated" from the construction slump.

30% tax credit for green home improvements

Green Building Elements - March 3

Energy-efficient remodeling may replace painting your bedroom as the most significant home improvement project of 2009. The government has now stepped in and will give back a 30% tax credit for homeowners who install energy-efficient windows, insulation or heating systems in 2009 and 2010.

WA green schools using more energy

Spokesman Review - Feb 28

A law passed in Washington state four years ago required certain "green" elements be incorporated into the construction of new schools. However, in addition to being more costly to build, these schools are allegedly using more energy than their "non-green" counterparts. Some commentators advocate revoking the law and saving school construction money in these difficult times.

Green building sector still growing in Maine

The Exception Magazine - March 2

Despite an unfolding economic recession, developers in Maine are still investing in building "green," as well as seeking certification through the USGBC's LEED certification program. "Our membership is growing faster than ever, our sponsorship is higher than last year, and our educational programs are drawing record numbers," said Heidi Farber, executive director of the USGBC's Maine Chapter.

Notable green building projects...

Merced's entire campus is LEED certified

Merced Sun Star - March 7

No other university in the United States has earned LEED Silver or better for every building on campus. For the fourth time since 2007, a completed building on UC-Merced's campus has earned LEED Gold certification from the USGBC. The Science & Engineering Building, completed in Jan. 2006, meets the requirements of the USGBC in the fields of water and energy usage; natural lighting; air quality; waste diversion; and recycling. Since 2007, the University's Central Plant complex, the Leo 7 Dottie Kolligian Library, and the Classroom and Office building were awarded LEED Gold certification; another facility -- the Valley Terraces and Yablokoff-Wallace Dining Commons -- earned LEED Silver.

Hiram College awarded LEED gold certification

Hiram College News - March 2

The USGBC has awarded LEED Gold Certification to Hiram College for its newly expanded James H. Barrow Field Station. David L. Sommers, AIA, Architects of Kent, Ohio, designed the recent Field Station renovation which achieved LEED certification for energy use, lighting, water and material use as well as incorporating a variety of other sustainable strategies.

Staples earns LEED gold certification in Miami

CoStar Group - March 2

Staples, the office supplies retailer, has earned LEED Gold certification from the USGBC for a 20,000-square-foot store in Miami. Staples planned to achieve LEED Silver when it first announced the project in the fall of 2007.

Unity House obtains LEED platinum

Village Soup - March 9

Unity House in Maine, the second home designed and constructed by Bensonwood Homes as part of the groundbreaking

Open Prototype Initiative, has achieved LEED Platinum designation, the USGBC's highest rating for environmentally sustainable construction.

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Small investments can lead to big gains

greenbuildingadvisor.com - March 2

With R-60 insulation and a south-facing wall filled with triple-pane windows, this passive house stays comfortable during cold Illinois winters with a heater the size of a hair dryer. The Smith House is the modest, comfortable home of German-born architect Katrin Klingenberg. More important, it's an example of what she believes could and should be done with residential construction in this country.

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