



MANAGING OUR WOODLANDS

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative is improving forest practices throughout North America and promoting responsible procurement globally.

Green remains the rage within the building community. Popular in the commercial sector and growing more attractive in the homebuilding sphere as well, buildings that are environmentally friendly have become increasingly mainstream.

But green isn't just about energy efficiency. The choice of building materials has a huge impact on the environment. And wood's inherent properties—as a sustainable, natural, recyclable, and renewable resource—make it an excellent choice for building green. Wood's outstanding environmental life-cycle rating, plus its desirable aesthetic and construction characteristics, make it an excellent environmental choice—provided, of course, it comes from a well-managed forest. But how can people be sure they are specifying products that have been logged legally from well-managed forests?

Internationally recognized forest certification standards provide this assurance. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program, for example, has been improving forest practices across North America and promoting responsible procurement globally for over a decade.

“As a trend with builders and architects, green building encompasses not only energy efficiency but also includes the materials you use,” says Kathy Abusow, president and CEO of the nonprofit SFI organization. “Builders want to know how the wood they're using was harvested and transported, and if it came from a well-managed forest. Obviously, you can't give green points for wood being a renewable resource unless the forest is actually renewed. That's where SFI certification comes into play. It makes the wood equation complete.”

Third-party certification bodies audit organizations to ensure that their forest management practices and tracking and procurement of forest products meet the rigorous requirements of the SFI standard. If the

certification is granted, the SFI label can be applied on building products, allowing builders and consumers to make choices that reward responsible forest management.

That said, having the SFI label isn't just a matter of legality or being responsible. “Harden Furniture prides itself on its ongoing commitment to the environment,” says Gregory M. Harden, president and CEO of Harden Furniture, in McConnellsville, N.Y. “Since we have more than 10,000 acres of managed woodlots, we work closely with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, which is designed to ensure that future generations of North Americans will have the same abundant forests we enjoy today. That's just one of the many reasons Harden Furniture is proud to be associated with SFI.”

Today, more than 150 million acres of SFI-certified lands across North America provide a secure supply of products to meet building or design needs. Many of the leading rating tools that building professionals and consumers use to help make decisions about green building products and practices recognize SFI certification, including the National Association of Home Builders, which incorporates the SFI into its Green Building Guidelines, and Green Globes, a nonprofit operating in the U.S. and Canada that promotes green building for residential and commercial construction. The U.S. Green Building Council is also currently assessing certification programs, including the SFI program, for recognition under its LEED rating system.

More so than ever, there is a clear need to recognize and reward North American wood from certified North American forests when it comes to strengthening North American green building rating tools, like those noted above. More than ever, North America remains a leader in well-managed forests. And SFI certification is the key to making sure it stays that way. ●



Chooses newspapers that begin life in the 152 million acres of SFI-certified forests.

Looks for homes constructed with wood from SFI-certified forests helping to ensure water, soil and wildlife habitats are well-managed.

Wants custom trim sourced from forests following the rigorous SFI Standard audited by independent experts.

Prefers clothing shipped in packaging from SFI-certified forests, where management must meet or exceed best management practices developed under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved programs.

MEET THE NEW ENVIRONMENTALIST.

These days, a growing number of consumers want the good life, but not at the expense of the environment. So when they shop for everything from newspapers to building materials, they look for the SFI® label on wood and paper products. These products come from well-managed forests certified to the SFI Standard and other responsible sources. To learn how you can shop to help keep our forests healthy, visit www.sfiprogram.org.