



2013 winner
of
**DAVEY
AWARDS**

ISSUES MANAGEMENT/ADVOCACY

USGBC LEEDV4 RFCI APPEAL

- Following discussions with the RFCI LEEDv4 Committee (Amy Costello/Dave Kitts/Diane Martel), Dean Thompson, Bill Hall and Bill Freeman met with USGBC leadership on February 6 at USGBC DC headquarters.
- USGBC participants included Mahesh Ramanujam, Chief Operating Officer; Scot Horst, Senior Vice President; and Susan Dorn, General Counsel.
- The discussion was positive and conciliatory. RFCI presented a path forward proposal that we felt was well received. Mahesh Ramanujam requested that RFCI send a formal letter to USGBC outlining the points that were discussed. USGBC committed to providing a written response within two weeks following receipt of the RFCI letter.
- Worked with the RFCI LEEDv4 Committee, and this letter was finalized and sent to USGBC today, 2/24. Letter will be copied to the RFCI Board of Directors.

AMERICAN HIGH PERFORMANCE BUILDING COALITION

● OHIO RESOLUTION

- To urge that Ohio state agencies and other government entities use green building rating systems, codes, or standards that are consistent with state energy efficiency and environmental performance objectives and policies and that meet ANSI voluntary consensus standards. (Supports the use of Green Globes vs. LEEDv4.)
- OH SCR 25 was formally introduced to the Ohio Senate Tuesday January 28th and public testimony was heard Tuesday February 4th in Columbus. A vote was expected shortly thereafter.
- “There is another delay in the vote. The Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee is not scheduled to meet week of Feb 17. The OH Senate President wants to discuss SCR 25 in the Republican Caucus again. So right now, the earliest vote would be Feb. 25. The Senate resolution sponsor -- Senator Uecker – continues to talk with the President and the AHPBC OH team is reaching out to see if they can at least get a vote in the committee tomorrow (Tuesday). This would allow the Resolution to sit waiting for a vote on the floor and allow the President to bring the issue up in Caucus Tuesday night, with a possible floor vote Wednesday of this week.”
- Thanks to Don Miller, Roppe, and others who wrote supporting letters.

● SOUTH CAROLINA BILL SCR 25

- This bill that freezes the use of LEED and Green Globes to the earlier versions was heard in committee on Wednesday, February 5. At the last hearing in the House, ACC was joined by the commercial contractors and the wood industry in support of the bill. The USGBC and architects opposed the measure.
- ANSI is the leading U.S. organization for consensus standard development. Recognized by the International Standards Organization (ISO), ANSI systems and standards are developed using a process that assures they are technically rigorous, fully transparent, and inclusive of broad expert stakeholder input and due process.
- By insisting that private green building rating systems used by South Carolina government follow ANSI procedures, South Carolina taxpayers will be assured that they are getting what they pay for when it comes to real energy efficient, environmentally friendly green buildings that use safe and effective South Carolina products.
- RFCI Member Parachem (Chris Bond) provided testimony during this SC hearing. Bill now at a temporary standstill.
- Looking for additional SC support. Reached out to flooring distributor, William M. Bird & Company.

GSA/DOE GREEN GLOBES

- GSA Administrator Tangherlini recommended that the Department of Energy (DOE) adopt Green Globes as one of its Green Building Rating Systems along with LEED 2009 (LEEDv4 not considered yet).
- Requires DOE rulemaking that will take place in 2014. RFCI will comment during public comment period. Considering possible OMB meeting working with the FVA.
- Very important initiative because determines ground rules for Federal government green buildings and whether monopoly created for LEED and anti-PVC bias will be eliminated.

CALIFORNIA PROPOSITION 65: DINP LISTING

- A California Proposition 65 Advisory prepared by ACC was sent to the RFCI Board, RFCI Technical Advisory Committee and Associate Manufacturers.

EPA DESIGN FOR ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE (DfE)

- Follow up work, supported by Bill Hall and Dean Thompson, is being coordinated by the Flexible Vinyl Alliance.
- Underway: Case Study of a Phthalates Alternative Assessment For Use in PVC-Jacketed Network Cable.
- Purpose is to examine issues and opportunities related to phthalate alternatives. DfE officials have stated: “Substitution that is not informed by the best available information and science can lead to unintended and undesired consequences.”
- Formal case study document will be submitted to EPA/DfE. Expected completion within 60 days.

CONGRESSIONAL ADVOCACY

● EPA DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR USE IN FEDERAL PROCUREMENT

- EPA is developing guidelines to assist the federal government in selecting private product environmental performance standards and eco-labels for voluntary use in federal government procurement.
- Important purpose is to clarify meaning of “environmentally preferable” purchasing under Obama’s Sustainability Executive Order which directs the federal government to purchase products that “are non-toxic or less toxic alternatives.”
- EPA’s request for comments provides an important opportunity for RFCI to advocate the use of voluntary, consensus-based standards developed by groups with a balance of interests (e.g. GBI/Green Globes), and not red-list standards developed by a handful of people behind closed doors (e.g. Option 2 of LEED v4 which discriminates against PVC products).
- Comments are due April 25, 2014.

- OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET (OMB) PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CIRCULAR A-119

- OMB Circular A-119 requires federal agencies to adopt private standards that are voluntary, transparent, and consensus based.
- Currently the Circular does not provide enough specificity about what standard-creating procedures must be used for a private standard to qualify for use by the federal government.
- Similar to EPA draft guidelines, the proposed Circular revisions provides an important opportunity to define with particularity the meaning of consensus-based standards so that only standards meeting specified due process, openness, and balance of interest criteria can be used by the federal government in green building /green product areas.
- Comments are due May 12, 2014.

- 2014 OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL.

- Bill passed out of the House and was sent over to the Senate.
- The American High-Performance Buildings Coalition (AHPBC), an organization of leading associations representing a wide range of interests in the building and construction industry, praised the inclusion of sustainable building language in the FY2014 Omnibus.
- The bill includes language that encourages the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to use green building systems that are voluntary consensus standards.
- The AHPBC issued the following statement:

“We are pleased the FY2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill, as passed by the House and sent to the Senate, contains language that encourages the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to use green building systems that are voluntary consensus standards. We’re also pleased Congress reinforced the benefits of the government using more than one system and hope GSA leads this effort by starting to use more than one system itself.”

- AMENDMENT: ENERGY SAVINGS AND INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS ACT (S. 1392)

Senator Landrieu (LA) testimony: Mr. President, I am concerned that many rating systems arbitrarily discriminate against domestically produced products based on arbitrary hazards, without consideration for risk of exposure, and supporting scientific data. Our amendment will address this issue by requiring an ongoing review of private sector green building certification systems and allowing for the exclusion of portions of green buildings certifications systems that are found to be discriminatory. This will not preclude efforts to exclude or reduce exposure to known environmental risks, such as radon, formaldehyde and volatile organic compounds; however, it will ensure that risk of exposure is not ignored. This process will support competition among green buildings certification systems and encourage existing systems to revise portions of their systems that are determined to be discriminatory to domestic products.

FORBO ANTI PVC ADVERTISING

- At the October Board meeting it was agreed that Jonathan Duck, Amtico Europe, would reach out to Forbo leadership. Jonathan received confirmation from Forbo CEO, Stefan Bauer, that they would look into the U.S. PVC advertising issues that were outlined. There has been no further feedback from Forbo and it is Jonathan's doubt that "Forbo central intent will turn into local U.S. reality".
- The Forbo "What is Your Legacy" campaign is still active. As the next step, I will prepare, with Bill Hall's assistance, a follow up letter to Stefan Bauer stating that the Forbo U.S. PVC campaign is still active and request his formal response to our concerns. We can address any further action on this matter at the May Board meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

- Dean Thompson scheduled meetings at Surfaces with several prospective RFCI Associate members.
 - Novalis
 - Mohawk
 - Raskin Industries
 - Lonseal
 - Bostik
- Novalis application submitted to Board and approved as an Associate Manufacturer.
- Mohawk and Raskin Industries confirmed their intent to join as Associate Manufacturers. Once received, applications will be sent to Board for approval.
- February 25th meeting scheduled with Shaw Industries in Dalton.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Completed survey of TAC members to insure TAC structure and strategic initiatives are on target. Presented during January meeting.
- Key initiative under discussion is re-opening the industry EPD's to allow for additional member participation.
- Allowing more participants in industry EPD initiative will provide a wider base for industry average.
- Finalizing Moisture & Resilient Floor Covering industry white paper.
- Bill Freeman presented the Product Transparency Declaration (PTD) initiative to the Wall Covering Association Annual Meeting, Construction Specifications Institute Sustainability Committee, and is scheduled to present at the Adhesive and Sealant's Council Summer Conference. Striving for broad adoption of this developing standard.
- ASTM advancing PTD as ANSI standard. On Feb 10th the first ballot for the ASTM/ANSI PTD Standard closed (Work Item # 44075). 232 members of ASTM Subcommittee E60.01 voted with 84 affirmative, 106 abstentions and 41 negatives. Bill Freeman currently working on resolving the negatives (from people like Healthy Building Network's Tom Lent) and plans to get another ballot out soon. The next meeting of ASTM E60 is in Toronto on April 9th where we expect there will be much discussion on this standard.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- RFCI Technical Advisory Committee – April 16, Atlanta
- RFCI Board of Directors and Associate Member Meeting – May 14-17, Orlando
- Vinyl Institute Fly In - May 20-21, DC
- NEOCON – June 9-11, Chicago
- SPI Vinyl Products Conference – July 13-16, Williamsburg, VA
- RFCI Technical Advisory Committee – September 17, Philadelphia
- RFCI Board of Directors and Associate Member Meeting – Oct 6-9, Newport Beach
- Vinyl Institute Annual Meeting – Nov 11-14, Turnberry Resort, Ft. Lauderdale

FUTURE YEAR MEETING SCHEDULE:

- RFCI Board/Associate Member Meeting - May 11-14, 2015:
The Sanctuary at Kiawah Island SC (Charleston)
- RFCI Board/Associate Member Meeting - October 19-22, 2015:
Four Seasons Los Colinas, TX (Dallas)