NEOCON's GREEN SCENE

By Penny Bonda

Brides marry, students graduate, and designers go to NeoCon. It must be June! There will be a lot to see and do at this year's Mart-fest, but if you're a greenie like me you'll want to zero in on what's new in sustainability—the products, seminars, and other special events.

Even fashionistas will want to don their most comfortable walking shoes before grabbing a copy of Interior Design's Show Directory and Show Daily. Look them over for the news items and road maps you'll need to successfully navigate NeoCon's green scene.

Before heading for the elevators—oh those elevators—check out The Green Spot on the first floor that celebrates not only The Mart's sustainable showrooms and products but also its certification as a LEED-EB Silver building. On Tuesday there's an insider's tour by the Mart executives and designers responsible for this terrific achievement.

But there's more, so much more. GREENlife at The Mart celebrates sustainable design by partnering with organizations and publications to help attendees find the products and resources they need to green their projects and businesses. On the 8th Floor, look for the GREENlife Energy Bar designed by TVS Interiors. Nearby you'll find exhibits by the U.S. Green Building Council, the Greenguard Environmental Institute, and the Chicago Center for Green Technology.

NeoCon is chock full of learning opportunities and because I'm participating in one, I'll mention it first. On Monday and Tuesday, Interior Design magazine will sponsor Ask Penny Live, an opportunity for you—my faithful readers and the newly curious—to ask me questions about green products, resources, certifications—whatever—and I'll do my darn best to both answer your queries and engage in good dialogues. So come on by the Market Suites, Suite B-3130, from 11am-12pm.

As you wander the floors you'll surely visit the showrooms and booths of the usual green suspects—the furniture, carpet, and textile companies that have long been associated with environmental achievement—plus some relatively new players to discover.

I'm going to be doing my part as well by selecting the best eco-friendly products at NeoCon and honoring them with a Green Star. The winners will be featured on The Green Zone on InteriorDesign.net following NeoCon.

It will be hard to escape green speakers at NeoCon, not that you'd want to given the quality of the program. Keynote Robert F. Kennedy Jr. always delivers inspiring insights into the environmental challenges facing our planet. Kennedy's focus, protecting our waterways, will also be addressed by spotlighted afternoon speakers Sarah Dunn and Martin Felsen of UrbanLab. Their presentation, "Growing Water In The City Of The Future," envisions the City of Chicago as a model of an environmentally holistic urban center.

GREEN PAGES 2008
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Booth 8-3139 F
NeoCon offers an entire environmental track of educational seminars. My choices include:

- **Green Is In The Details** (Monday 11am-Noon) by Henning Bloech of INVISTA - good life cycle info.
- **Successfully Managing Your LEED-CI Projects** (Monday 1-2pm) by Elaine Aye and Chessa Adsit-Morris of Green Building Services - they've been there, done that.
- **Biophilia** (Monday 4-5pm) by Judith Heerwagen - an amazing speaker and fascinating topic!
- **Call It ReGreen - Green Residential Renovation Guidelines** (Monday 4-5pm) by Linda Sorrento of USGBC - residential designers, this is what you've been waiting for.
- **Beyond Recycled Content: Getting To Sustainable Products** (Tuesday 9:30-10:30am) by Kirsten Ritchie - the standards and certification expert.
- **Call To Action: How To Create A Sustainable Library** (Tuesday 11am-Noon) by Rachelle Schoessler Lynn and David Loehr of Studio 2030 - who doesn't need to know this?
- **Communicating and Interpreting Challenging Climate Issues** (Tuesday 1-2pm) by Lindsay James of InterfaceFLOR and Holley Henderson of H2 Eco Design - the issue of our time.
- **The Integration Of Tenant Improvements, Workplace Health, and Productivity** (Tuesday 4-5pm) by Rachelle Schoessler Lynn and David Loehr of Studio 2030 - the dynamic duo back again with indispensable info.
- **Making A LEED Certified Home Healthy** (Wednesday 11am-Noon) by Marilyn Black of Greenguard Environmental Institute - IAQ directly from the expert.
- **Green Buildings and Acoustic Design** (Wednesday 1-2pm) by Ken Roy and Anita Snader of Armstrong Ceiling Systems - the forgotten green amenity.

Two association forums have also caught my attention:

- **The Why, What, & How Much Of Green Building** (Monday 1-2pm) by Doug Widerner - presented by USGBC Chicago Chapter ($45 fee)
- **Sustainable Lighting Design For This Green Old House** (Tuesday 1-2pm) by Mark Loeffler of Atelier Ten - presented by IALD ($35 fee)

There you have it—a (very) short guide to turning a darker shade of green at NeoCon. I hope to see you there.
PRODUCT CERTIFICATIONS

Tried and True or New - What's Real?

by Penny Bonda

SINGLE ATTRIBUTE STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATIONS

ENERGY STAR
Introduced in 1992 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE), Energy Star is a voluntary labeling program that evaluates and rates energy use for over 50 different electric products. Major categories include appliances, electronics, lighting, commercial food service, and office equipment products that generally use, at a minimum, 20 to 30 percent less energy than non-rated counterparts. May earn LEED points. www.energystar.gov

FLOORSCORE
The Resilient Floor Covering Institute, an industry trade association, partnered with SCs, a third-party certifier, to provide air-emissions labeling for hard-surface flooring including vinyl, linoleum, laminate flooring, wood flooring, ceramic flooring, rubber flooring, wall base, and associated accessories. The FloorScore seal certifies compliance with the volatile organic compound emissions criteria of the California Section 01350 program. May earn LEED points. www.rfci.com

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (FSC)
The Forest Stewardship Council is an international network that promotes responsible management of the world's forests, brings users together to find solutions to the problems created by bad forestry practices, and rewards good forest management. FSC itself does not issue certifications, but rather accredits certification bodies in order to maintain its independence from those seeking certification. Although there are competing forestry certifiers, such as SFI and AFTS, many view FSC as the gold standard. May earn LEED points. www.fscus.org

GREEN LABEL AND GREEN LABEL PLUS
This second-party labeling program, implemented by the Carpet & Rug Institute (CRI), establishes allowable emission limits of various substances from carpets, carpet pads, and adhesives. CRI, a trade association, is seeking approval as an ANSI certified developer, which will add credibility to its standards. May earn LEED points. www.carpet-ansi.org

GREENGUARD
Founded by Air Quality Sciences, a testing laboratory, Greenguard is an independent, third-party certificate program for more than 165,000 low-emitting products and materials in 25 industries. The more recently introduced Greenguard Children in Schools certification, which meets California's chronic reference exposure levels (CRELS), added additional and more stringent testing thresholds. May earn LEED points. www.greenguard.org

WATERSENSE
Modeled after the EPA's Energy Star program, WaterSense identifies water-efficient plumbing products. Products that bear the WaterSense label meet all the criteria in the EPA's specifications for water efficiency and performance. Generally speaking, WaterSense labeled products will be about 20 percent more water efficient than their less efficient counterparts. www.epa.gov/watersense