

# NEWSLETTERS

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August 1999

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## Green Built Home partners celebrate successful year

On June 16, 1999, builders, partners and supporters filled the garage and driveway of the Michael F. Simon Builders Madison Parade of Home entry for a recognition event to celebrate the success of the Green Built Home pilot program.

Twenty-six builders were recognized at the event for their participation in Green Built Home at this year's Madison Parade of Homes. The program partners, WEI, Madison Area Builders Association, Wisconsin Green Building Alliance, Madison Gas & Electric and the Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation, were recognized for creating and implementing Green Built Home. Green Built Home funding partners, Dorgan Associates, Home Environment, Thermal Comfort and Wisconsin Supply Corporation also received recognition.

"Green Built Home has been a great success because of the commitment of the participating builders and the program partners," said John Imes, WEI Executive Director. "This year's inaugural effort will have significant and tangible benefits for our state's environment and has been a terrific launch of Green Built Home."

Modeled after a successful program in Denver, Colorado, the Green Built Home program was created to lessen the environmental impacts of residential construction, educate the home buying public about green built products and processes, and recognize builders who take pro-active measures to protect the environment.

Homes that receive Green Built Home certification have less of an environmental impact than traditionally built homes because by design they conserve water, energy and other natural resources, are energy efficient, and use recycled or renewable products and materials. An additional benefit for the home buyer is fewer pollutants inside the home.

Many of the Green Built Homes in this year's Madison Area Parade of Homes exceeded the required energy efficiency rating of 86, attaining an 88. Energy efficiency is rated by the state's home energy rating system called the Home Performance Rating. It reviews a home's energy related components such as levels of insulation, types of windows, location and direction on the lot, building air tightness, and efficiency of the mechanicals. The rating is measured on a scale of 1 to 100, and like a miles per gallon figure for a car, the rating gives homeowners a basis for comparing energy efficiency of homes.

Green building materials and products are made from recycled content thus reducing the need and energy to extract new materials. They are resource efficient and produce less waste than typical products and have a long life-cycle requiring less maintenance. Materials are also non-toxic and renewable or replaceable within a period of time. Contrary to widespread opinion, it doesn't cost more to build green. There are green building alternatives that cost the same as conventional options. When a particular feature does cost more the extra cost is made up over time by the ongoing savings in energy costs.

Home buyers who purchase a Green Built Home benefit in many ways including: the assurance that their home is energy efficient having received a high Home Performance Rating; eligibility for rebates of \$250 or more through the Home Performance Rating program; reduced energy costs on an on-going basis; improved indoor air quality and knowing that their home has a reduced impact on the environment.

For more information on green building see the Green Built Home page on WEI's website at [www.wi-ei.org](http://www.wi-ei.org).

## **Director's View**

Greetings,

The history of interactions between environmental organizations and the business community has certainly changed over time. In the 1960s and 1970s, prompted by Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, images of the Cuyahoga River on fire, and the first Earth Day, environmental groups focused on environmental advocacy and the development of environmental laws and regulations. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the relationship between business and the environmental community was mostly adversarial.

In the early 1990s, environmental organizations such as the Environmental Defense Fund began to explore whether appropriate use of market forces might result in greater environmental benefit than command and control regulation. As a result, new market approaches such as trading systems for SO<sub>2</sub> emissions and financial incentives to utilities for energy efficiency investments began to take shape.

In the late 1990's, a growing number of environmental organizations including the Natural Resources Defense Council, World Resources Institute, Business for Social Responsibility, Conservation International, Rocky Mountain Institute (and our own Wisconsin Environmental Initiative) began to develop direct relationships with business and industry groups to explore opportunities for developing and implementing policies and practices

which further business environmental performance. WEI's Business & Environment Series and the Green Built Home program are examples of our effort to assist businesses, builders and other groups to improve environmental performance and truly "do well by doing good"!

It takes time to build and maintain relationships with business groups and understand each other's mission, goals and approaches before undertaking specific projects. To ensure a successful business-environmental organization partnership it also takes shared goals, trust, respect and clarity about desired outcomes. The Green Built Home program, for example, is designed so that all parties have a strong interest in achieving success. WEI's interest is to significantly reduce the environmental impact from building construction and leverage change throughout the broader construction industry. The Madison Area Builders Association is interested in a voluntary approach to further positive environmental outcomes while creating market distinction for builders who implement green built technology, practices and mindset. As a result of our innovative "green" partnership we celebrate:

- 26 builder Green Built Home participants (75%) in this years Madison Area Parade of Homes
- An average energy rating of 88 for Green Built Home participants which is 20-25% more energy efficient than the new state energy code put into effect May 1, 1999
- 26 Green Built Homes which will reduce green house gas emissions by 78,000 pounds per year as compared to homes built to the new state energy code
- Educating tens of thousands of the home buying public on green built products and processes at this year's parade and thousands more via television, radio and print

The success of Green Built Homes is a shared one. A network of partnership between the Madison Area Builders Association, WEI, Wisconsin Green Building Alliance, MG&E, Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation, Energy Center of Wisconsin and the Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center, along with Dorgan Associates, Home Environment, Thermal Comfort and Wisconsin Supply Corporation, made this inaugural year the resounding success it is. I congratulate all of our partners for their creativity and guidance and look forward to continued work together as we expand Green Built Home throughout Dane county and Wisconsin.

As we set our sights on the next century, we look forward to a time when positive interaction between business and environmental organizations is the norm rather than the exception; where we all work together toward outcomes that benefit our environment, economy and quality of life in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

John Imes

**In Brief...**

**WEI produces recommendations on Animal Agriculture in Wisconsin**

The conference series *Animal Agriculture and Wisconsin's Future*, WEI's most recent project in Agriculture and Land Use, brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to objectively examine the issue of livestock expansion and the public's concerns with it. A goal of the project was to produce consensus-based recommendations for further action that would protect Wisconsin's environment and quality of rural life and improve the profitability of livestock agriculture.

After an initial conference in December that outlined the economic and environmental issues related to animal agriculture, working groups in Fond du Lac, Eau Claire, and Richland Center met from January through March to probe deeper into the issues, record specific concerns and produce recommendations. The consensus-based nature of the recommendations and the non-partisan process by which they were developed give the findings significant value and credibility.

In the area of environmental protection all groups believe that a regulatory system based on performance standards is preferable to NR 243. Such a system would set environmental thresholds and allow producers to meet them however they choose. Most groups believe that thorough scientific research should precede the establishment of any new regulations pertaining to both odor and water quality. Research should include environmental and health risks, best management practices and emerging technology. The groups also believe that certification of farmers meeting environmental performance standards should be explored as an incentive for implementing best practices.

Most, but not all, participants believe that financial resources and incentives should be provided by the government to help implement environmental best practices. Opinions varied about how funds should be allocated. Suggested options included giving existing farms or smaller farms priority over large, new or expanding farms, assigning no priority and sun-setting the availability of funding.

Groups believe that extensive education on best management practices (for both odor and water) is needed for producers. Broad public education is needed in the areas of the food system in general and environmental practices that farmers currently use or are implementing to be good land stewards.

Funding for the conference was provided by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Read the Summary Report at [www.wi-ei.org](http://www.wi-ei.org). To obtain a copy of the Animal Agriculture and Wisconsin's Future Summary Report, e-mail WEI at [wei@itis.com](mailto:wei@itis.com) or call (608)280-0360.

### **'Best practices' report results from *Shoreland Development in Wisconsin* conference**

A 'best practices' report is now available to Wisconsin's lake associations, citizen groups, developers, realtors, local, county and state government personnel and others as a result of WEI's October, 1998, conference *Shoreland Development in Wisconsin: Balancing a Healthy Environment and Economy.*

Responding to the need for orderly shoreland development, the conference was convened with the support of the Wisconsin Timber Associates, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin County Code Administrators, the Wisconsin Builders Association, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Wisconsin Out-of-State Land Owners Association with a goal of producing a Summary Report highlighting 'best practices'.

Read the Shoreland Development in Wisconsin Summary Report at [www.wi-ei.org](http://www.wi-ei.org). To obtain a copy of the Report e-mail WEI at [wei@itis.com](mailto:wei@itis.com) or call (608)280-0360.

## **Wisconsin Green Building Alliance hires Director**

Connie Lindholm recently joined the Wisconsin Green Building Alliance (WGBA) as Director. Before coming to WGBA, Lindholm served as the Recycling Education Coordinator for the city of Milwaukee, worked on Clean Sweep and owned an art gallery and framing business. For more information on WGBA, contact Ms. Lindholm at (414)577-1015.

## **Member Profile - Tom Boldt**

### **President, The Boldt Group, Inc.**

In 1997 Tom Boldt attended one of WEI's first events, a CEO Symposium on Business Sustainability. He was very impressed with what he heard - so much so that six months later he joined the Board of Directors of WEI.

"I like the practical approach WEI has taken. It recognizes the need of businesses to be profitable while embracing change," said Boldt. "I like WEI's ability to get people with different views together. I also want to be a part of a group that looks long-term. I hope our efforts can raise awareness. More importantly, I hope we can point to tangible results of our efforts whether it's in land development and planning, farming or "green" building, or other areas."

Long-term is a hallmark of The Boldt Group, a diversified parent company of one of the nation's top 100 construction management firms, the 110-year-old Oscar J. Boldt Construction Company. The company is well-known throughout the Midwest for projects including the skyboxes in Lambeau Field, Green Bay; the Kohl Center in Madison; St. Luke's Medical Center, the Municipal Corrections Center, the Wisconsin Electric Power Company headquarters in Milwaukee; and paper mills in the Fox River Valley.

Boldt sees great opportunities and great challenges in moving a business toward sustainability. His company is part of a consortium of companies and institutions that are working on new technologies for bleaching in the paper industry, they seek out environmentally-friendly products and recycle on the job site.

"Each and every business is making changes or they won't be able to survive. The burdens we place on businesses to provide quality goods and services, fair wages and benefits, tax revenues, and support for communities are large," said Boldt. "Business leaders are

motivated by many different things. None would walk away from an opportunity to do well by doing good. How you get there is the rub."

Boldt has been successful promoting "green" building on many of their projects. But he's well-aware of the challenges a business faces when trying to implement these strategies. "Our society too often supports short-term solutions. These may support quarterly earnings projections but do little to add long-term value to a corporation or society," said Boldt. "Like any movement, "green" building has its supporters and detractors. It will convert its followers one project at a time. As long as it can demonstrate tangible results in construction and operational costs, function, aesthetics and quality, the potential for "green" to play an important role in the built environment is certainly strong."

Boldt is realistic about how quickly green building will move from trend to norm. "I don't envision widespread "green" practices in the near term. For all of our talk about change, change does not come quickly," said Boldt. "I do see a growing recognition by consumers for energy efficiency in their homes and appliances, protection of the environment and use of recycled materials. Consumers are decision makers and their desires and interests, hopefully, will manifest themselves into more "green" practices."

## **'Doing well by doing good'**

### **Making the case for improved environmental performance**

The phrase "doing well by doing good" is mentioned in business circles a lot these days. It's a compelling though slightly vague expression; one that deserves to be clearly understood. Quite simply, leading companies are finding that improved environmental performance saves money and provides competitive advantage. Doing well (financially) by doing good (environmentally).

How well you ask? Ray Anderson, Chairman & CEO of Interface, Inc., the world's largest producer of commercial floor coverings guided his company towards sustainable manufacturing that resulted in savings of over \$50 million in waste elimination at 26 manufacturing sites around the world.

"We've seen a new way to win in the marketplace," said Anderson. "One that doesn't come at the expense of our grandchildren or the Earth, but at the expense of the inefficient competitor."

But "doing well by doing good" is not the exclusive turf of huge global corporations. Companies of all sizes and sectors have improved environmental performance and realized wide benefits by reducing waste, maximizing resource efficiency and improving product and service design. For example, small to medium size companies here in Wisconsin are providing "green" products and services for residential and commercial construction in the emerging "green" building marketplace. Dane County businesses such as Rayovac, Placon and Windsor Homes have found value and competitive advantage from environmental initiatives.

So how does your business "do well by doing good"? Primarily by using good technology, practices and mindset. While strategies to improve environmental performance may differ depending on a companies' sector, size and culture, leading companies follow a series of steps to manage their environmental impact.

**Environmental policy development:** Companies committed to reducing their environmental impact start by creating a set of environmental principles, standards and goals. These statements express a company's intentions toward the environment in the design, production and distribution of its products and services. Leadership companies also recognize that to be effective an environmental policy needs to be endorsed by top management and embraced by employees.

**Developing eco-audits:** Before a company attempts to reduce its environmental impact it's important to first gain a full understanding of it. This usually involves some kind of environmental audit. A wide range of audit approaches are available that help companies understand the type and amount of resources used and the types of waste and emissions generated. Companies use this data to quantify bottom-line benefits and establish priorities for future business decision-making.

**Innovative waste reduction:** At the heart of many companies' environmental commitments is the reduction of toxic chemicals, energy and waste throughout their operations. Leadership companies promote the idea that "waste" represents something they can't sell -- in short, lost profit. Minimizing or eliminating waste involves a wide range of initiatives to ensure that all processes from desk-top to dock-door are examined for waste reduction opportunities.

**Supply-chain environmental management:** Many companies that are "greening the supply chain" find that working with suppliers on environmental issues not only generates environmental benefits but also offers opportunities for cost containment and strategic and competitive advantage. Businesses see a range of benefits with an effective supply-chain environmental management program.

**Green Design:** Green design applies to both products and buildings. Many leadership companies are designing and building environmentally conscious buildings where the life-cycle costs (the total cost of building, owning and maintaining the structure) are equal to or lower than that of a conventional building. Green product design includes a variety of techniques and strategies to increase a product's recycled content or create a system for its reuse or recycling.

Business environmental responsibility in the new millennium will involve more than compliance with government regulations or implementing recycling and energy efficiency initiatives. Leadership companies will take a more comprehensive approach which integrates environmental responsibility as a core business value at all levels of their operations. And as we say at WEI, may the most eco-effective company win!

(Wisconsin Environmental Initiative will convene six management forums on Business and the Environment. The series features half day seminars in Milwaukee and Madison where

participants will learn and share strategies with application exercises, peer-to-peer roundtable's and online discussions. Tools for integrating environmental management strategies and evaluating business risks and opportunities will be presented. For more information contact program staff at (608)280-0360 or email [info@wi-ci.org](mailto:info@wi-ci.org) For more information about WEI see [www.wi-ci.org](http://www.wi-ci.org) ).

## **The 1999 Business & Environment Series**

### **Improving business environmental performance with cost-effective practices**

While strategies to improve environmental performance may differ depending on a companies' sector, size and culture, leading companies follow a series of steps to manage their environmental impact. WEI's Business & Environment series will help businesses implement these steps emphasizing peer-to-peer networking and learning and the development of tools and guides that further business environmental performance. The B & E Series also features an online discussion group that gives participants on-going communication and learning opportunities to have specific questions addressed throughout the year.

A new feature of this year's Series is the opportunity for participants to bring a colleague at no extra charge. Including key people in relevant discussions allows for more effective communication with various business units and an enhanced ability to implement B & E strategies in the workplace.

The B & E Series is sponsored by Brady Corporation, Business for Social Responsibility, Earth Tech, Energy Center of Wisconsin, Godfrey & Kahn, Kohler Company, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Department of Urban & Regional Planning, UW-Madison. Oscar J. Boldt Construction Company, Miller Brewing Company, Quad/Graphics, Inc., Rayovac, Serigraph, The Nature Conservancy and Wisconsin Electric Power Company.

Series topics include:

- Making the business case for improved environmental performance
- Environmental policy development
- Developing eco-audits
- Innovative initiatives for toxin reduction, energy efficiency, waste minimization and recycling
- Supply-chain environmental management
- Emerging trends: green design

Series dates are listed in the Calendar section. For more information on the Series contact Karl Bryan at [kbryan@wi-ci.org](mailto:kbryan@wi-ci.org) or (608)280-0360.

## **Benefits of Membership**

**Support WEI and reap the benefits**

Are you making the most out of your membership to WEI? Learning from the nation's and state's environmental leaders, building connections between you and your customers or community, networking with peers and demonstrating leadership by implementing environmentally and economically sustainable practices are all key benefits of membership in WEI. If you've been a member for a few years, please consider making a renewed commitment in support of WEI's important work by upgrading to a higher level of membership. If you're not a member, now is the time to join and take advantage of the benefits of membership and support WEI's innovative approach.

## **Membership Opportunities**

### **Individual Citizen (\$50), Individual Business Professional (\$95)**

Member Benefits: newsletter and discounted conference registrations.

### **Small Business or Non-Profit Organization (\$295)**

Member Benefits: Individual level benefits and recognition on select WEI publications.

### **Corporate (\$495)**

Member Benefits: Small Business level benefits and complimentary conference reports.

### **Corporate Plus (\$1,500)**

Member Benefits: Corporate level benefits and one complimentary conference registration.

### **Sponsor (\$3,500)**

Member Benefits: Corporate Plus level benefits and recognition on WEI letterhead.

### **Benefactor (\$8,000)**

Member benefits: Sponsor level benefits and an additional complimentary conference registration.

For more information on membership contact Connie McElrone at [wei@itis.com](mailto:wei@itis.com) or (608)280-0360.

## **Calendar of Events**

### **August**

20:

Business & Environment Series - Environmental policy development: Getting boardroom, CEO, and employee support. The Pyle Center, Madison, WI; WEI (608)280-0360

## **October**

1:

Business & Environment Series - Developing eco-audits that link environmental performance to business decision making. The Alumni Partnership Center, Milwaukee, WI: WEI (608)280-0360

22:

Business & Environment Series - Innovative initiatives for toxin reduction, energy efficiency, waste minimization and recycling. The Pyle Center, Madison, WI; WEI (608)280-0360

26:

5th Annual WEI-2 Workshop, Madison, WI; Wisconsin Energy Initiative\_2 Program: (608) 267-7971

## **November**

12:

Business & Environment Series - Supply-chain environmental management. The Alumni Partnership Center, Milwaukee, WI; WEI (608)280-0360

## **December**

10:

Business & Environment Series - Emerging Trends: Green Design. The Pyle Center, Madison, WI; WEI (608)280-0360

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