



BUILDING & REMODELING WITH FSC

For Residential Projects



FSC Project Certification

In 2006 FSC International approved a new standard for the certification of building projects that makes it possible to promote the use of FSC-certified wood. The standard's range of application is wide: from buildings, to houses, to sailboats and airports. The standard can be applied to anything that was built using FSC-certified wood.

Three pilot projects were initiated during the development of the standard and the first two projects were aiming for full project certification. This means that at least 50% of the cost or volume of the wood used in the project is FSC-certified and/or post-consumer recycled material. The remaining wood must be reclaimed material, or from FSC controlled sources. Projects under this scheme can be promoted under the name of FSC-certified - e.g. "FSC-certified airport".

The partial project certification option has no minimum input requirement for FSC-certified products. For example, houses built with FSC-certified window frames, doors, stairs and sheds can earn partial project certification which allows the owners to make claims such as "FSC-certified wood was used to build the stairs in this home."

If you are interested in obtaining project certification, please contact an FSC-accredited certification body: www.fscus.org/certifiers. To read the standard in full detail, please go to www.fsc.org and look for: FSC-STD-40-006 FSC Chain of Custody Standard for Project Certification.

Photo Credit: NorthWest Crossing



Making it Happen: Developers

Strategies for Making it Happen as a Developer

Developers are often hard pressed to develop new home living experiences which will differentiate their communities and homes from their competitors. As future homebuyers become more familiar with global warming, energy efficiency, climate change, tropical deforestation and other human related impacts on the planet, developers should expect to answer more questions about the potential environmental impact from their communities and homes. Incentives for planning and developing a green community include: reduced operating costs, higher value, a marketing edge, and staying ahead of government regulations.

It can be a daunting task to ask your homebuilders to 'build green' and 'reduce the negative environmental and social impacts' of our community and homes without providing them guidance. Currently, there are over forty-five local or regional residential green building programs in North America focused on improving the construction industry's use of natural resources. These programs have been developed by trade associations,



Incentives exist for planning and developing a community to meet green standards.

independent non-profits, academic institutions, municipal governments, and utility companies. Even though all of these programs have the same goal of reducing the home building industry's impact on the environment, they employ different strategies to meet that goal.

One common element in all of these programs is that Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products are highlighted as a method for earning points toward a greener community or home. However, the FSC-certified wood market is still growing; therefore FSC-certified products are not always readily available. Still, projects have been successful in building with FSC when they take the time to research availability, provide incentives in contracts, order in advance and educate the homebuilders/subcontractors/suppliers about the project's goal for using FSC-certified wood for specific applications.



Projects have been successful in building with FSC when they take the time to research availability, provide incentives in contracts, and educate others about the project's goal.

Photo Credit: NorthWest Crossing

Initially you will have to select a green building standard for your prospective homebuilders. This selection should meet your business and environmental goals, plus resonate with your potential home buyers. Look into the local, regional, and national green building programs. Keep in mind that, a local program might be easy to use due to that fact that it was designed for your region, but a national program may have more marketing power.

Once you have determined the level of certification you want to achieve, the next step will be to decide which credits or points they will need to reach your certification goal. Providing resources to prospective builders on green building and FSC will allow them to become familiar with new industry terms, practices, and products. (See Resources section of this guide)

Building material suppliers, flooring showrooms, cabinet manufacturers and other wood processors are still becoming familiar with their role in the new emerging industry of green building and FSC-certified products. Due to the green building movement's youth, many suppliers of home building products have heard little about FSC products and therefore have not earned a Chain-of-Custody (COC) certificate. The value of a developer educating their homebuilders, subcontractors, and suppliers will be very important as the project goes into the building phase.



Case Study – Northwest Crossing in Bend, OR



New Urbanism has become a positive trend in many parts of the country.

Photo Credit: NorthWest Crossing

Bend, Oregon is an idyllic place with over 250 days of sunshine, year round snowcapped mountains, and a development called NorthWest Crossing. West Bend Property Company began development of this project in 2002. The plan focused on developing a 486 acre mixed use community that would include 1,000 homes in an area with restaurants, shops, parks, schools and trails. The goal was to make this development about ‘livability,’ by planning and designing it using the ‘traditional neighborhood development’ concept. This concept, often referred to as New Urbanism, has become a positive trend in many parts of the country as developers look to offer homebuyers with a different option than the industry standard ‘cookie cutter’ suburban development.

West Bend Property Company was not just interested in providing trendy, well designed homes and buildings without any concern for the buildings themselves. Working off a strong sustainability ethos, West Bend Property Company insisted that all of its homes earn EarthAdvantage certification and that the mixed use commercial buildings earn Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification. EarthAdvantage is a non-profit organization based in Portland, OR, that works with builders and developers to bring the most energy efficient, sustainable and healthy homes to the market. LEED, developed by the US Green Building Council (USGBC), is a nationally accepted green building rating system for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.

Within the EarthAdvantage checklist there are a number of volunteer green building design features and material selections that would allow a given home project to earn points toward certification. The use of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products in the form of dimensional lumber, plywood and interior finishes is one way to earn a number of points. At a minimum, West Bend Property Company required its builders to adhere to the entry level certification of the EarthAdvantage program, but several builders have exceeded that minimum requirement and built homes certified as platinum.

David Ford, General Manager of West Bend Property Company, provides some insight into his company’s sustainable business ethos, “We encouraged our builders to be as green as possible. We believe green business practices are the way to operate, now and for the long term.”



“We recognized about five years ago that green and sustainable business practices were an approaching wave, now we believe if a business is not committed to green and sustainable business practices they will be left behind. The market will only continue to demand more sustainability.”

David Ford
General Manager of West Bend
Property Company

Photo Credit: West Bend
Property Company

In cooperation with 3e Strategies, EarthAdvantage, and other organizations, West Bend Property Company sponsored a number of educational forums for builders in their region. These green building forums included speakers, workshops, and green building product manufacturers and suppliers who could assist the local builders with sourcing products to build EarthAdvantage certified homes in NorthWest Crossing.

One company that attended the green building forum in Bend, OR was Miller Lumber Company. Charley Miller, CEO at Miller Lumber, had already received an FSC COC certificate and his company played a vital role in working with builders to find the products they needed in order to build green



The marketing benefits of building green at NorthWest Crossing have been evident.

Aside from West Bend Property Company’s commitment to the environment and sustainable business, the marketing benefits of building green at NorthWest Crossing have been evident too. More home buyers are asking about the greenness of their homes and Northwest Crossing has EarthAdvantage certification and FSC-certified wood products to answer those questions and sell homes.

“We recognized about five years ago that green and sustainable business practices were an approaching wave,” said Mr. Ford, “now we believe if a business is not committed to green and sustainable business practices they will be left behind. The market will only continue to demand more sustainability.”

