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SPI establishes metrics to validate capability of D&C companies to deliver sustainability

February 24, 2011 - Green Buildings

Greenwashing has become ubiquitous over the past year, getting major coverage from The New York Times to The Moscow Times. Despite this market penetration, green labels such as LEED Certification do not address issues of company performance - this void is now leading building owners and developers to seek a better way to cut through "professional greenwashing" and hire project teams that they can trust to deliver on their green promises. In response to this need, the Sustainable Performance Institute (SPI) has developed the first independent certification program to evaluate the capabilities of design and construction companies to deliver consistent, high-quality sustainability services. The certification demonstrates to clients, and to the industry, that sustainability has been institutionalized into all aspects of a company's management, operations, and project delivery.

Today, the SPI announces the first public comment period for the certification program. The public comment period is an opportunity for the green building community to offer feedback on the certification's 64 required credits and 15 optional credits across five categories: 1) leadership, strategy & policy, 2) project delivery, 3) infrastructure and support systems, 4) partnering and collaboration, and 5) outcomes and performance. The criteria were developed and vetted with industry experts and participating companies during a pilot phase from November 2009 through May 2010. Comments will only be accepted through website submission until 12:00 pm PST on March 18th at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SPICertificationPublicComment>. In addition, during the 45-day comment period, SPI will host a live workshop on March 1st from 12:30-1:30pm in Boston and a live webinar on March 1st from 3-4pm to elicit feedback on and discuss the Certification criteria. After the comment period closes, SPI will synthesize the input and incorporate common feedback into the next version to be released in Spring 2011.

Barbra Batshalom, who founded The Green Roundtable 13 years ago, said: "Input from the community is so critical. I have already seen how much the broader perspectives of the companies and experts we've worked with have enhanced the certification program. We're looking forward to this community dialogue taking the program to the next level."

SPI is currently offering companies that sign up for certification together by March 18th a 20% discount and a group workshop on Building Your Team for Competitive Advantage. Sign up online at </civicrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=10>.

But the SPI is not all about certification - it's about building capacity in design and construction companies to achieve higher levels of performance on all projects. To that end, SPI is going on-the-road to deliver Greening Your Firm Boot Camp workshops to guide company leaders through the creation and implementation of strategies to increase profitability, performance and market differentiation. Workshops are currently scheduled for AIA chapters, USGBC chapters and industry

conferences in the midwest, southeast, west coast and northeast.

Leading design and construction companies have signed up for the certification program to demonstrate capability to increasingly-savvy building owners and developers. Doug Noonan of CoreNet Global recently shared his motivation for endorsing the program: "This certification will absolutely be a factor in my selecting an architect, engineer, and contractor. Every service provider that comes to us tells us they're LEED professionals and experts in sustainable design and construction, but there's no way for them to back that claim up and there's no way for me as a client/owner to know what their company will deliver on that claim."

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