

West Bros. awarded SFC Silver Status

HANOVER, Ontario - Solid wood case goods manufacturer West Bros. Furniture is the first Canadian furniture manufacturer to be awarded *Silver Exemplary Status* by the U.S.-based Sustainable Furniture Council (SFC).

The award allows West Bros. to display the SFC *Silver Exemplary* logo and use accompanying hangtags at the retail level to help inform and educate consumers about the importance of purchasing furniture manufactured using sustainable business practices.

According to the SFC, achieving the award achievement signifies the recipient has either met or exceeded its requirements regarding the use of FSC certified wood products, recycled or bio-based materials and that their supply chain has positively been affected by their efforts.

In addition, West was able to show the SFC that they have created policies and programs involving:

- Living wage commitments to employees;
- Supplier code of conduct requirements;
- Energy reductions within the manufacturing facility;
- Significant reduction in transportation-packaging waste;
- Educational training concerning the effects of climate change with their community; and,
- Product reclamation and recycling initiatives.

Additional points were given for the implementation of an innovative production efficiency program which reduces wood-waste by up to 45 per cent. Their work with the federal government on a scientific research and experimental development project has led to new advanced processes in the production of their products.

"Our efforts are fuelled by the continued commitment to listening to the concerns of our customers and our community" said sales and marketing co-ordinator Steve Maynard. "We are inspired to pursue the task of producing a superior, domestically produced, high end product that has the smallest possible impact on our environment."

Maynard also encourages other manufacturers globally to "do what they can do to raise global environmental standards and take up the fight to protect future generations."

West Bros. launched their *Plant a Tree* policy during the fall 2007 High Point Furniture Market, promising to plant a tree for every piece of furniture sold, and allow consumers to name the tree in their name or on behalf of a loved one. The company plans to grow this program and introduce new internal initiatives such as a preventative maintenance program, further energy reductions, and life cycle assessments on their products in 2008.

West Bros. is the only Canadian founding member of the SFC, which is based on Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Maynard is a member of its marketing committee. The council maintains a web site at www.sustainablefurniturecouncil.org.

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