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Contact: Greg Stanko
Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide for
the Carpenters Industrial Council
(202) 729-4146
Greg.stanko@ogilvypr.com

New Study Shows Green Globes™ System Equal, In Some Cases Superior, to LEED System

Portland, Oregon, October 31, 2006 – According to a new University of Minnesota study released today by Carpenters Industrial Council, a division of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, the Green Building Initiative's Green Globes™ was found to be functionally similar to, and in certain key areas, superior to the older, more established LEED® System.

In the study titled, "Green Building Ratings Systems: A Comparison of the LEED® and Green Globes™ Systems in the U.S.," researchers at the University of Minnesota, led by Dr. Timothy M. Smith, compared Green Globes™ to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®), version 2.2. While the study noted that more similarities than differences existed between the two systems, Green Globes™ distinguishes itself in several areas.

"This first-of-its-kind study by the University of Minnesota confirms what the United Brotherhood of Carpenters has been arguing before state and local governments for more than two years – the Green Globes™ Standard is a more than an acceptable alternative to LEED®. In some areas, it is superior," says Denny Scott, an economist with the Carpenters Industrial Council. "As local legislators consider green building standards for public building projects, this comparative study will be helpful as they consider which standards to put in place. It clarifies the appropriate standards and confirms that the Green Globes™ Standard is less costly, easier to use and gives greater consideration to the full life cycle of building materials."

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The researchers found that the Green Globes™ methodology for accessing and integrating green design principles for buildings is far less complex than LEED®. Green Globes™ uses an interactive online approach, while LEED® is largely a paper-based system. The researchers also noted that Green Globes™ web-based self-assessment tool can be completed by any team member with general knowledge of the building's parameters. It also provides both preliminary and final ratings during the assessment process. In contrast, the researchers found LEED® tends to be more rigid, time-intensive and expensive to administer. In some cases, the study noted that LEED® certification can take up to four months. As a result, the researchers concluded that, at this point Green Globes™ "seems more in line with the real world conditions of scarce time and financial resources...."

In addition to its ease of use, the researchers also noted that Green Globes™ has introduced a rating criterion that reflects the concept of life-cycle assessment – a tool used to assess the overall environmental, energy and health impacts of products and buildings. Green Globes™ system covers the entire life-cycle of building materials in its assessment, while LEED® does not explicitly address the topic. Similarly, when it relates to functional quality (i.e. describing the quality of service of the product studied as well as its duration) Green Globes™ addresses the topic, especially the durability issue, as a separate criteria. LEED® features no equivalent in its system.

The University of Minnesota study has three main sections – a review of the relevant literature, a discussion of the two systems and comparative matrices and a review of a 2004 General Services Administration case study of the construction of a new courthouse using LEED® with a comparison if the government had used Green Globes™.

As part of discussion of the two systems, the University of Minnesota researchers developed a system of common categories into which it reclassified the Green Globes™ and LEED® elements since both systems attach differing values to certain aspects of green building, expressed by moderately dissimilar point allocations. The objective comparison of process and content differences was facilitated by the introduction of eight generic categories of analyses: 1) Energy Use; 2) Water Use; 3) Pollution; 4) Material/Product Inputs; 5) Indoor Air Quality & Occupant Comfort; 6) Transport; 7) Site Ecology; and 8) Other Sustainable Design. Each system's credits or points were allocated to the category that best represented the "intent" of each point category and/or subcategory. The researchers found that there was significant overlap between the two systems with more than 80 percent of the credits available in one system also available in the other. The biggest difference the researchers found was that Green Globes™ placed greater emphasis in energy use, while LEED® placed a greater emphasis on materials, based on the percentage of points within the categories, relative to the comparative rating system.

Copies of the full study are available on the Carpenters Industrial Council web site at <http://www.cic-ubc.org> and the University of Minnesota web site at fpmi.cfans.umn.edu/projects/greenbuildingratings/GG_LEED-10_06.pdf.

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About the Carpenters Industrial Council

The Carpenters Industrial Council (CIC) was chartered July 1, 2006, by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America with the merger of four regional councils. The Council's jurisdiction includes Locals and District Councils across United States. The majority of the Union's members are employed in the forest products industry.