

Greenbuild Expo, 2013

Green Building

The US Green Building Council (USGBC) celebrated its 20th year at its annual international conference and exhibition, November 20-22 in Philadelphia. The USGBC is the organization that drives the LEED green building standard which has been widely incorporated in new commercial and public building construction projects.



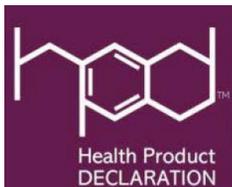
Final attendance has not yet been released, but an estimated 35,000 people attended Greenbuild 2013 in Philadelphia.



The USGBC launched LEED v4 in the summer of 2013. The new version has generated significant controversy within the materials and building products world, as well as some within the architectural community, with the inclusion of new credits that push for product disclosure and transparency.

Credit MRc4 – Materials Ingredients, requires disclosure of raw materials and concentrations to levels of 0.1%.

What the new product transparency credits mean to composite material suppliers is unclear. However, an ad-hoc group from the [ACMA's Green Composite Council](#) will be working to understand the new credits and produce educational information and guidance to composite fabricators.



Are you familiar with the terms 'HPD' or 'ECD'? If not, prepare yourself for a new set of acronyms that are sure to become more familiar in the coming months.

Aside from the educational sessions on the new LEED credits, what were the 30,000+ show attendees doing? Hopefully they were learning more about [composite building materials](#) and the benefits composites provide.

Composites and Green Building

Composites offer green builders a variety of benefits through the inherent characteristics of composites such as durability, low weight, design flexibility and low thermal conductivity. Composite also offer many functional benefits through the applications they are utilized, such as daylighting, water handling and [green energy](#).

Attendees to the Greenbuild conference were able to find composite materials around the show floor. And while composites are still not as well represented as the traditional materials of concrete, steel, aluminum and wood, composites companies are making a stronger showing at these types of end user shows than in previous years.

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Composites Around the Floor

So where were composites especially visible and how were these products positioned?

Water Handling

Efficient water handling and use is showing increasing levels of importance to the green building industry. The composites industry provides an important part of this solution through the use of underground [water handling](#) tanks, filter units and ancillary systems.



The composites was well represented with [Xerxes](#), [Containments Solutions](#), and [Orenco](#) all showcasing the use of composites in water handling applications.

Air Handling

Indoor air quality is a recent hot topic with the sustainable building crowd. Composites provide a unique solution in [air handling](#) applications that require corrosion resistance or must be buried below grade.



[Monoxivent](#) was showing their line of FRP air handling vents and their ability to provide design, installation and start-up services

Day Lighting

Introducing natural daylight into a building space can be beneficial to health and productivity. Composite [light panels](#) provide an effective means of adding natural light while maintaining structural integrity.



[Kalwall](#) and [Bristolite](#) helped attendees understand how composite panels can address daylight needs.

Window & Door

[Composite window](#) lineals continue to grow in use due to their low thermal conductivity (ie – energy efficiency) and their high durability and thermal stability. Thermal stability means that FRP window lineals don't expand/contract like other materials and because of this significantly reduces the separation of the glazing from the lineals.



[FiberFrame](#), [Integrity](#), and Anderson were 3 of the many window and door providers that helped attendees learn more about the benefit of composite lineals for windows.

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Surfaces

Composites were featured prominently in several [surfacing applications](#). These included residential applications for kitchen counters, bath and shower, and commercial applications such as wash rooms, reception areas, and wall surfaces.



[InPro](#) showcased the use of composites in their Endurant line of wash room surfaces.

Composites are well received in these applications and seem to have significant growth opportunity in the commercial sector because of the design flexibility offered in the initial build and the low maintenance demands of composites during their long life.



[Bradley's Verge series](#) shows off the design flexibility that composites offer the building community for use in commercial wash rooms.

CompositeBuild.com Exhibit

As seen in the text and photos above, there were many places around the show floor that allowed attendees to learn about the use of composites in a specific building application. However, one exhibit at the show was dedicated to helping the building industry learn about the huge variety of [composite building materials](#) available and the [benefits](#) that composites offer.



The Ashland, Inc. sponsored [CompositeBuild.com](#) exhibit helped attendees learn more about composites in building applications and connect the Greenbuild audience to the fabricators and designers of composite building products.

What's Next?

Composites are gaining broader acceptance as the design/build community begins to better understand the benefits composites offer in areas such as design flexibility, low maintenance, high strength to weight characteristics and durability.

The first ever composites pavilion will be found at the AIA show in Chicago, June 2014. If you want to learn more about composites use in building applications, this is a can't miss event!

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