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THE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN OF ALLSTEEL'S NEW STRIDE SYSTEM

(CHICAGO, IL— JUNE, 2009)—With the launch of its new Stride workplace furniture solution, you might say Allsteel has hit its sustainability stride. The truth is, Allsteel has surpassed all previous achievements in sustainability, because Stride was developed and is built from the ground up to be as environmentally responsible as possible.

It began by applying lifecycle thinking throughout the product design process and making sure that sustainable standards were met at each stage of *Design, Build, Use, Reuse and Recycle*.

“At Allsteel, we believe it is our obligation to protect and respect the environment,” said Kris Yates, the company’s Vice President of Marketing. “We are driven to create only products which meet if not exceed sustainability standards, and Stride, more than any other Allsteel product, reflects our commitment.”

Stride is the first complete furniture solution from Allsteel to utilize the structured Design for the Environment (DfE) framework—a platform for asking questions, assessing information and making choices to effectively incorporate environmental thinking into a product. Every component in Stride was scrutinized through the DfE lens and then validated with certifications issued by third party authorities including McDonough Braugart Design Chemistry (MBDC) Cradle-to-Cradle (C2C) and Scientific Certification System (SCS) Sustainable Choice. What’s more, Allsteel’s DfE development process links to the BIFMA E3 sustainability standard.

Design...Build...

Stride is made from relatively few materials—steel, 100% lead-free aluminum, particle board work surfaces and plastics such as ABS, nylon and polyester fabrics—with nearly all containing significant recycled content. These materials were selected not just for their outward appearance, but also for their chemically sound and reliably safe composition. MBDC has decreed that these materials merit the C2C Silver level certification for Stride.

Among some of the more innovative material choices is wheatboard, an alternative to particle board. It is made of agricultural fibers, primarily wheat straw, traditionally considered as waste but rapidly renewable. The wheatboard is bound with a urethane-based resin and no urea-formaldehyde is added, which means it is virtually VOC-free. What also makes it a preferred sustainable choice for Stride is that the wheat straw source is near the supplier's plant in Minnesota.

Noteworthy, too, are the Stride panel fabrics. Among the offering are Eco-Intelligence Polyesters, a collection that is MBDC certified Cradle-to-Cradle Gold. Unlike other polyesters, these are free of heavy metals, chlorine and PBTs, and they can be perpetually recycled and re-manufactured in a closed loop system.

As for the *Build* of Stride, because Allsteel has long been a proponent of Rapid Continuous Improvement (RCI) manufacturing, reducing waste, streamlining production and conserving resources are routine practices. The result is a higher quality product that is measurably more sustainable. Biomimicry also has had an impact on Stride's sustainability quotient. By mimicking waste-free processes suggested by nature, Allsteel has been able to simplify the overall construction, create universal parts and reduce the number of pieces required, thereby reducing both the plant footprint and the carbon output of the manufacturing. Then, of course, there's the fact that 100% of the energy used to produce Stride is fully offset with the purchase of Green-e Energy certified wind renewable energy certificates (REC) from the Midwest region.

Water conservation also is observed in the *Build* stage of Stride, particularly on painted parts. The water used in Allsteel's painting processes is filtered by a reverse osmosis (RO) system that annually saves about 1.87 million gallons—enough water to fill three Olympic-sized swimming pools. For C2C Gold level water certification, Allsteel diagramed the water flows associated with all of its manufacturing and implemented stewardship programs to improve them.

Use...

When it comes to customer *Use*, Stride indisputably offers a sustainable solution. Stride is SCS Indoor Advantage Gold certified, an assurance that goes beyond other third party testing because the individual parts are tested and detailed results are provided on emissions performance, whereas others confer either a pass or fail grade on the whole system. The Indoor Advantage certification satisfies the LEED indoor air quality credit (EQ 4.5). In fact, Stride can contribute as many as 16 of the 21 baseline LEED-CI certification credits. Although furniture, overall, does not have a large impact on LEED-NC, the LEED-CI's EQ 4.5 of Stride can be used in a LEED-NC project as an Innovation & Design credit.

Not to be overlooked is the exceptional quality and durability of Stride. It is an enduring design that continually can be reconfigured to reinvent a space—which means it won't need to be replaced as frequently, conserving resources and helping further to save the environment. Stride is backed by Allsteel's Lifetime Warranty.

Reuse...Recycle...

Stride is made up of 46% recycled material and is over 90% recyclable. And, at the end of its useful life, Allsteel has planned well for its next stage of *Reuse* and *Recycle*.

In a partnership with Green Solutions North America, Inc. (GSNAI) and its Revive program, Allsteel will ensure that when Stride reaches the end of its first

useful life, it will be retrieved, restored, if necessary, and then repurposed for use by a worthy non-profit organization. If it is beyond restoration, the GSNAI/Allsteel team through Revive will make sure that all components are properly recycled. In fact, the easy disassembly of Stride was purposely incorporated to facilitate recycling, and it helped earn Stride C2C certification. Such responsibility goes beyond the usual take-back program; it is an end-of-life solution unique to Stride.

For more information on Stride and on Allsteel's commitment to sustainability, visit www.allsteeloffice.com.

About Allsteel Inc.

Allsteel Inc. designs, builds and delivers progressive and relevant workplace furniture solutions. The company has Resource Centers in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, New York, San Francisco, Santa Monica, Washington, D.C., and Toronto, ON.