

# Stewardship in the Allsteel Mission

Public awareness of the importance of environment and sustainability has dramatically increased in the building industry, driven primarily by LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Environment is not a new concept at Allsteel and our parent company, HNI. Our first environmental policy was issued in 1978, we integrated pollution prevention techniques into our manufacturing processes in the 1980s, empowered employees to operate lean and minimize waste in the 1990s, and constantly seek better ways to improve the environment today. Our Enterprise Sustainability Policy, which united our environmental responsibility with our social responsibility programs, was approved in 2008 to meet the requirements of the BIFMA e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard. It's part of our corporate culture of Rapid Continuous Improvement (RCI).

Allsteel's credibility is very important to us, so we adhere to the Federal Trade Commission Part 260 *Guide for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims* and use third-party experts to certify our products' environmental impacts. We only make statements that we can substantiate.

## A sampling of our commitment and accomplishments:

### Our philosophy and people

- “We will be a great place to work.” The HNI Vision Statement says it all. We pursue a participative environment and support a culture that encourages and recognizes excellence, active involvement, ongoing learning, and contributions of each member; that seeks out and values diversity; and that attracts and retains the most capable people who work safely, are motivated, and are devoted to making our company and our members successful.
- In 1992, the Japanese experts who taught Kaizen to Toyota came to HNI (Allsteel's parent company), which began our path of Rapid Continuous Improvement. RCI empowers employees to improve production and materials efficiency and eliminate waste, benefiting the environment, natural resources, and the bottom line. Allsteel teams regularly study all areas of production, packaging, shipping, and service to ensure that all processes are efficient, protective of workers and the environment, and lean.
- HNI Corporation was awarded the Ethics Inside® 2009 certification from Ethisphere Institute, the only independent verification of a company's ethical practices and compliance processes. Over 50 criteria were evaluated in the 15-month certification process, including HNI's organizational culture, compliance programs, corporate governance systems, social responsibility initiatives, environmental performance, regulatory track record, and third-party perceptions.
- HNI Corporation was again named as one of *Fortune* magazines Most Admired Companies for 2008, based on eight key attributes – innovation, people management, use of corporate assets, social responsibility, quality of management, financial soundness, long-term investment, and quality of products/services.

### Our impacts on our planet

- Not everyone recognizes that durability is an environmental attribute, but products that last longer decrease the need to harvest and transport new natural resources, decrease energy use, keep products out of landfills longer, and can be reused by second- or third-generation end users after the initial purchase. All of Allsteel's products are designed and built to be durable for many years of service.



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- Allsteel, as part of HNI Corporation, is guided by an Enterprise Sustainability Policy and procedures that tie together the elements of sustainable development. Examples include procedures such as Design for the Environment (DfE) and Manufacture for the Environment (MfE).
- The State of California's 1350 Green Specification for Open Office Furniture limits indoor air emissions such as formaldehyde, and is the most stringent and protective standard in the entire country. Allsteel was awarded the State of California furniture contract in 2001 and again in 2009 for being the company that could meet those standards.
- Allsteel was the first company to have all products tested by an independent laboratory and certified by a third-party organization in accordance with the new LEED for Commercial Interiors EQ 4.5 Option C. This method sets more protective emission limits and provides us with more detail than Options A (Greenguard® certification) and B (USEPA ETV) so we can test new product components individually, identify potential need for improvements, and produce products that meet or exceed LEED's indoor air requirements.
- Allsteel provides bulk packaging and blanket wrap for office furniture shipments in an effort to reduce packaging waste, make the unpacking process more efficient for the end user, and decrease costs for both while reducing carbon emissions. We've drastically cut back in the use of corrugated packaging we use, and the corrugated that is needed has recycled content and is recyclable after use. Our ComPacked™ chair cartons decrease space needed in trucks, allowing more products per truckload and fewer trucks on the road, so less fossil fuel is used and less greenhouse gas emitted.
- All Allsteel products contain recycled content in their component parts. The levels vary depending on the component (such as a panel), the type of material (such as plastic or fabric), and the percentages of the materials, by weight, that make up the component. We produce Environmental Data Sheets that provide the post-consumer and pre-consumer recycled content of Allsteel products for those seeking LEED for Commercial Interiors credit MR 4.1/4.2.
- Several of our products are easily recyclable (depending on local recycling markets), have fewer component parts than standard, and have a take-back program for customers to return them at the end of their useful life. Allsteel introduced PLA panel fabric (made from the starch component of feed corn) to the contract furniture market in 2004.
- In 2005, Allsteel introduced Reach®, a unique office storage solution that doesn't require a spine wall (it actually serves that function itself), so fewer natural resources are used to set up an office, workspaces are more efficient and less space consuming (reducing office energy use), and manufacturing impacts on the environment are decreased. In addition, Reach uses recaptured paint to coat the interior of storage drawers so overspray paint is not landfilled.

#### **Our search for better ways and sharing of knowledge**

- We are constantly striving to improve our products and decrease their environmental impacts through RCI, research, design change, and seeking new materials that provide quality with less impact on the planet's natural resources. Allsteel was among the first five companies to meet the BIFMA Sustainability Standard. We achieved Cradle to Cradle<sup>SM</sup> certification for our Acuity<sup>®</sup> and Stride<sup>™</sup> furniture lines. We incorporated Design for the Environment principles into our new furniture design process. We are expanding our use of Life Cycle Thinking to assess the impacts of our materials so we can make better choices.
- Allsteel/HNI shared the benefit of years of experience with the technique of Rapid Continuous Improvement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by assisting in the development of *The Lean and Environment Toolkit*. The toolkit is available free on EPA's website to teach other companies how to realize the environmental improvements Allsteel has achieved.



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- Allsteel led the development and use of the Environmental Data Sheet (EDS), a comprehensive but concise summary to inform consumers of product attributes. Readers can learn about recycled content, air quality achievement, product care, and other useful information.
- Allsteel hired a Sustainability Programs Manager with extensive background in environmental innovation, government regulations, and interactive training to expand the knowledge of Allsteel members, designers, and clients in the concepts of sustainability.
- Allsteel joined the U.S. Green Building Council in 2004.

### **Our impact on our community**

- In 1999, Allsteel transformed an empty manufacturing facility that was a community eyesore into a beautiful corporate headquarters featuring a constructed streambed to slow storm water runoff and natural light for members' well-being. Pursuing the urban infill of an empty building, instead of building on a "greenfield," put existing community resources back into productive reuse.
- We installed "Solar sunflowers" (solar collectors) at our corporate headquarters to supplement the power needs of the office building and introduce the practicalities of solar energy to the community. The two units produce enough power to run 40 laptop computers each sunny day. Allsteel increased energy efficiency and is evaluating geo-exchange, solar, and wind energy for our office and factory. We offset much of our carbon emissions with Renewable Energy Certificates.
- All Allsteel and HNI members are encouraged to participate in activities beneficial to their local community. We're on the Board of Directors of Keep Muscatine, Iowa Beautiful, participate in Earth Day activities, and support local organizations in time of need.

### **Our leadership in the environment**

- Allsteel's parent company, HNI, first issued its Standard Practice Instructions titled "Corporate Energy and Environmental Protection" in 1978, then followed up and clarified steps to be taken with its "Corporate Pollution and Waste Elimination" in 1991, formalizing our environmental management system. Our policies and procedures for environment, energy, safety, and responsibility were united in 2008 into the Enterprise Sustainability Policy to ensure that the HNI family of companies remains at the forefront of sustainability best practices.
- Allsteel won a 2009 Green GOOD DESIGN™ Award from The European Center for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies and The Chicago Athenaeum. Allsteel was honored in the Corporations category for its lean and "green" manufacturing that incorporates more sustainable solutions into its internal system of Rapid Continuous Improvement. RCI helps Allsteel reduce its environmental footprint by streamlining the manufacturing process, thus minimizing waste and its use of natural resources.
- Allsteel has been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with its Pollution Prevention Award (in 2004), by the State of Iowa for manufacturing excellence in several categories (including environmental responsibility), and by the U.S. General Services Administration with its Evergreen Furniture Award (in 2003) for Allsteel's environmental efforts in the area of waste prevention, recycling, model facility, affirmative procurement, and environmental preferability.
- Allsteel was the first contract office furniture manufacturer to be certified in Scientific Certification System's Indoor Advantage™ and Indoor Advantage Gold air quality certification programs to assure the best possible indoor air quality for office workers.



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- Allsteel and HNI played a leading role in the development and pilot testing of the BIFMA Sustainability Standard, the first such effort of its kind, to find ways to benchmark, improve, and compare the impacts of office furniture on materials, energy, human and ecosystem health, and social responsibility.
- Allsteel was among the first five companies to achieve Sustainable Choice™ certification (first Silver, then Gold certification) for meeting the BIFMA Sustainability Standard for furniture with all our systems furniture lines. The certification program name was changed to level™ and Allsteel is level-2 certified. Three of the first five companies certified were in the HNI Corporation family of companies (Allsteel, HON, and Gunlocke).
- Six Allsteel Resource Centers have achieved LEED for Commercial Interiors certification: San Francisco (Silver), Atlanta (Gold), Santa Monica (Silver), Boston (Silver), Toronto (Gold), and Chicago (Gold).
- Allsteel has registered its headquarters office and manufacturing facility with the U.S. Green Building Council to seek LEED for Existing Buildings (Operations and Maintenance) certification.



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