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The 2030 Challenge Benchmark Set

Building Design Leaders Unite on Energy Reduction Targets

ATLANTA – To reduce the building design industry’s impact on the environment, key leaders in that sector are collaborating to establish carbon-neutral buildings by the year 2030.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA), the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), Architecture 2030, the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), supported by representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy, finalized an agreement of understanding this week, establishing a common starting point (benchmark) and a goal of net zero energy buildings.

This agreement allows the building design sector to move forward with designing buildings that use substantially less energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create spaces that are healthy and comfortable, according to the groups.

While focused on designing net zero energy buildings, the ultimate goal is carbon-neutral buildings by 2030. In joining together, the groups recognize that the building sector accounts for almost half of all greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. annually.

To reach that goal, Architecture 2030, AIA, ASHRAE, IESNA and USGBC agreed to define the baseline starting point for their common target goals as the national average energy consumption of existing U.S. commercial buildings as reported by the 2003 Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS). CBECS data is a set of whole-building energy use measurements gathered by the DOE’s Energy Information Administration, which can be used to determine a national energy use intensity using kBtu/sqft-yr as the metric.

“ASHRAE is excited to work with the various organizations that have participated in developing this agreement,” Terry Townsend, ASHRAE president, said. “Collectively, our programs, initiatives and goals now have an agreed-upon baseline to operate from in our common quest to achieve a sustainable future. The challenge is now upon each organization to make good on their commitments.”

“The task we face is daunting,” Edward Mazria, founder and executive director of Architecture 2030, said. “Working separately, we could accomplish something significant in each of our respective spheres. But by working together, we actually have a chance to influence the course of history - and we will.”

"Establishing a baseline for reducing energy consumption is a critical step in the goal of curbing the emissions generated by the built environment," said AIA president RK Stewart, FAIA. "From this baseline, the design and construction industry can use this reference point to ensure that new or renovated buildings are designed to operate in a smart, healthy and efficient manner."

“This agreement is a significant demonstration of the importance of an ongoing alliance among the key organizations responsible for building design,” Kevin Flynn, IESNA president, said. “Careful deliberations

have resulted in agreed upon goals for addressing substantial reduction in energy use. IESNA looks forward to pursuing these goals in collaboration with the partnering organizations.”

“By working together on this important initiative, we will make a difference in the built environment,” said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO & founding chair of the USGBC. “Buildings are a big piece of the climate change puzzle but the good news is they are also part of the solution, and together we will make an impact.”

Using the CBECS 2003 data, Architecture 2030 has compiled a table, available on its website (www.architecture2030.org), which provides the national averages and The 2030 Challenge energy reduction targets for building types not available in Target Finder. A similar table can also be found at Energy Star’s website, www.energystar.gov.

About Architecture 2030

In January of 2006, Architecture 2030 issued The 2030 Challenge, a global initiative stating that all new buildings and major renovations reduce their fossil-fuel GHG-emitting consumption by 50% by 2010, and all new buildings should be ‘carbon neutral’ by 2030. By galvanizing and collaborating with the key players in this sector, including the US Conference of Mayors (USCM), Department of Energy (DOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), US Green Building Council (USGBC), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), American Institute of Architects (AIA), American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), and many others, Architecture 2030 is working to achieve a dramatic reduction in the global-warming-causing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of buildings by changing the way they are designed and constructed.

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