

TOP 10 GREEN BUILDING PRODUCTS 2007

As all things green have gained momentum and market appeal, separating the wheat from the chaff has become an increasingly important task for discerning members of the green building community.

"There's a lot of commotion out there these days," says one of the judges for this year's Top 10 Green Building Products awards.

The *Sustainable Industries* Top 10 Green Building Products awards recognize companies that are innovators, pioneers and proven performers in creating high-quality, high-value, resource-efficient products. Winning products may also help builders earn credits

toward certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

Our team of judges from across the United States scrutinized nearly 50 nominations submitted by readers, manufacturers, architects, designers and distributors. Each of the judges submitted a list of his top 10 picks, comprising 23 finalists.

On a conference call with *Sustainable Industries* editorial staff, our judges explained the reasons for their selections to the group and, after a good discussion, the group came to an agreement about this year's winners.



Neil Kelly Naturals Cabinet Collections

WEB SITE

www.neilkellycabinets.com

WHERE IT'S MADE

Portland

POTENTIAL LEED CREDITS

Indoor Environmental Quality 4, Materials and Resources 6 and 7

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This year, when California set limits on the amount of formaldehyde that can be present in building materials such as wood composites and glues, Portland-based Neil Kelly Cabinets found itself ahead of the game with its Neil Kelly Natural Collection.

The bodies and drawers of the cabinets in the Naturals collection are made up of formaldehyde-free agriboard and use glues and finishes with low levels of volatile organic compounds, or VOCs. The agriboard can be composed of several different renewable crops including wheat, grass or wood fiber and starting next year, waste from rice crops. The company also offers all-natural oil finishes for its four lines of natural cabinetry.

In addition to their human health benefits, the cabinets are built with forest health in mind. The cabinet faces are made with wood that is harvested in



compliance with the well-respected sustainable forestry standards set by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Custom cabinetry is an increasingly regional business, and Neil Kelly was a pioneer of the business model, *Sustainable Industries'* judges said. For non-West Coast builders, shipping may make the cabinets prohibitively expensive, but other small manufacturers are following the innovative company's lead.

The cabinets tend to be on the high-end of the price spectrum, but according to Rick Fields, president of Neil Kelly Cabinets, the cost of materials prohibits the company from bringing the prices down.