



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Tom Clark, Director of Marketing
Phone: 920-380-2172
Email: tclark@hoffman.net

Northland Pines earns Hoffman nation's first environmental gold rating

APPLETON, Wis. – Hoffman, LLC's decade of dedication to a green building philosophy that is good for the Earth and cost-effective for clients has culminated with its Northland Pines High School design and construction project in Eagle River, Wis., being named the first LEED gold certified public high school in the United States.

The prestigious environmental designation – awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council in Washington, D.C. – certifies that the school meets standards for energy and water use, clean indoor air, recycling of building materials and other factors that made the school's construction gentler on the northwoods environment. Hoffman, an Appleton-based design-build firm, and its subcontractors rewarded the Northland Pines School District's willingness to strive for higher environmental standards, while still delivering the project at a square-foot cost below industry averages.

"We started working with them from the vision stage," Paul Hoffman, president of Hoffman, LLC, said of the relationship with the administration and school board members. "We had the end in mind from the first day we talked to them."

The goal was to earn silver certification and become the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified K-12 school of any kind in Wisconsin. They achieved that and went one step further to gold certification, the second highest of four levels awarded by the USGBC.

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“It tells us we built the building correctly – we were sensitive to the environment,” School Board President Tom Christensen said. “It means we picked a good company to help us build our building.”

The 253,000-square-foot high school, built for up to 600 students, opened for the 2006-07 school year. It features an atrium central commons area, naturally lit classrooms, clean air monitoring and water-saving dual flush toilets and waterless urinals. Even the cleaning products were selected based on low fume emissions and non-hazardous chemicals.

The high school was built at a cost of \$116 per square foot, 23% below the national median cost of \$150 per square foot for high schools built in 2006, according to *School Planning and Management* magazine’s “2006 Construction Report.”

“The project’s LEED gold certification validates and confirms that it can be done at low or no cost, and it’s one of those right things to do,” Thomas R. Cox, AIA, LEED AP, principal-in-charge for Hoffman, said. “There’s no reason not to do it.”

Cox said the design team discussed the concepts with school district officials early on simply as being good design. ““Everyone saw the higher-level benefit of including these concepts. It just made so much sense to everybody,” he said.

Northland Pines District Administrator Mike Richie said he is very pleased with the project. “It exceeded our expectations, because all along our goal was a silver certification,” he said. “It’s nice to be a front-runner when it comes to having an environmental school.”

Richie said students seem more respectful of the new building and happy to be there, and morale has improved for both staff and students.

Mark Hanson, director of sustainable services for Hoffman, said the dedication to making green building possible and affordable permeates all of the work the company does in the educational, municipal, office, medical and commercial sectors. For more than 10 years, he said, Hoffman has employed energy-saving technology and environmental design concepts, including in building its own headquarters in 1999 – when LEED certification was still a little-known pilot program.

Highly designed mechanical and lighting systems, along with higher insulation standards, will provide energy savings of 40 percent over conventional construction, but LEED certification goes well beyond energy savings.

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Recycled materials constitute nearly 25 percent of the total building material cost for the new high school and an impressive 83 percent of all building wastes were recycled, including those from demolition of the 27-year-old structure it replaced.

A crew of Amish workmen salvaged large laminated beams and removed and remilled wood flooring that will now enhance other building projects, Jody Andres, project architect for Hoffman, LLC, said. Old brick and mortar were ground up and used in the roadbed and under parking lots.

Northland Pines High School also incorporates:

- **Daylight harvesting** – High ceilings and strategic placement of gray Low-E windows add daylight to classrooms (which research shows improves student performance, attendance and teacher morale) without unwanted glare or heat gains and losses.
- **Water efficiency** – Water-reducing bathroom fixtures and the use of climate-appropriate plants to eliminate permanent irrigation systems will create annual water savings of approximately 35%.
- **Sustainable site design** – Two large detention basins retain all storm water on site, landscaping employs native species, priority parking encourages car-pooling or bicycling, and a portion of the site will be protected from future development.
- **High indoor air quality** – Low- or no-VOC (volatile organic compounds) products were specified for adhesives, paints and carpeting and carbon dioxide levels are constantly monitored.
- **Local materials** – More than half (by cost) of the materials used were manufactured within 500 miles of the construction site to reduce fuel consumption and pollution associated with transporting them.

Paul Hoffman said the company is not a newcomer to the now-fashionable concept of building green. Hoffman, LLC, is dedicated to its philosophy of *Total Project Management: Vision Taken to the Power of Green*. “It’s part of the fabric of who we are and what we stand for,” he said.

Tom Christensen is happy with the results of that philosophy.

“It’s important to our taxpayers – today and in the future – that we built a building that is energy efficient,” he said. But there’s more to design than efficiency. While the environmental impact is low, Christensen said the new high school is high-impact in another way. “Everyone walks into that building and it’s just: ‘Wow,’” he said.

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Attachments: Bullet list of project highlights; contact list; building photos; headshots of Paul Hoffman, Thomas Cox.

Northland Pines High School – Eagle River, WI

The nation's first LEED gold certified public high school

The Project:

- First LEED gold certified public high school project in the United States.
- First LEED-certified K-12 school building of any kind in Wisconsin.
- Highest-rated LEED-certified high school in the United States. Awarded 40 of a possible 69 points by the USGBC, achieving gold certification.
- At \$116 per square foot, 23% less costly than the typical new high school being built without meeting LEED standards for environmental impact, clean building air and waste reduction. The national median cost for high schools built in 2006 was \$150 per square foot. (Source: *School Planning and Management* magazine's "2006 Construction Report")
- Building size: 253,000 square feet; capacity for 600 students.
- Project cost: \$28.8 million, including site preparation, furnishings, fixtures and fees.
- Includes a 49,570-square-foot fieldhouse with seating for 2,000 – an enhancement over the previous high school complex – that offers open workout hours to the public.

The Company:

- Hoffman, LLC, has been involved in more than 20 LEED certified projects.
- Hoffman, LLC, conducted the energy modeling for the highest-rated LEED project in the world – renovation of the headquarters building of Alberici Corporation, a St. Louis, Mo., construction company. The project earned 60 of a possible 69 points from the USGBC and achieved LEED platinum certification, the highest level possible.

Contacts:

Hoffman

Paul Hoffman
President

Phone: 920-380-2121

Mark Hanson
Director of
Sustainable Services

Phone: 608-692-1915

Tom Cox
Principal-in-Charge

Phone: 920-380-2124

Northland Pines High School

Mike Richie
District Administrator
Phone: 715-479-6487

Tom Christensen
School Board President
Phone: 715-479-4930