

For Immediate Release

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The CSSBI and University of Waterloo Pursue Carbon Neutrality in Steel Building Systems

Cambridge, ON (September, 2009) – The Canadian Sheet Steel Building Institute (CSSBI) Canada's foremost authority on sheet steel building products, has recently joined forces with the University of Waterloo, School of Architecture and the Department of Civil Engineering, to lead the way towards a Carbon Neutral Steel Building System (CN-SBS).

Statistics show that the built up environment, including commercial/industrial buildings and homes, collectively represents one of the single largest sources of greenhouse gases in North America. While builders are achieving greener, more sustainable designs and pursuing certification programs, the efforts are not enough. The CSSBI and the University of Waterloo have created a Carbon Neutral Steel Building System (CN-SBS) Project Team to explore the aspects of design and construction required to achieve carbon neutrality.

Leading the project as architectural consultant is Professor Terri Meyer Boake, LEED® AP, Associate Director of the School of Architecture at the University of Waterloo. "This CN-SBS project is in response to the growing percentages of greenhouse gases and the mounting dilemma of global warming," says Professor Boake. "We want to create and disseminate the resources and tools needed to integrate carbon neutral and zero-energy design into professional architecture programs and practice." she adds.

The CN-SBS Project Team will evaluate three areas in terms of sustainable design and energy use using a variety of existing green building protocols. The project will propose new approaches for using steel, determining how Steel Building Systems can improve the energy efficiency of a building while decreasing its overall carbon footprint. The team will use a retail building of approximately 6000² (6,458 sq. ft.), which represents a large segment of the built environment. Specifically, the three areas that will be explored and evaluated, include a comparison between a typical steel building system and a heavy timber framed building; completing the schematic design of a carbon neutral retail building with a steel building system; and an analysis of the sustainability of the project with emphasis on carbon neutrality.

Professor Lei Xu, Associate Director of the Canadian Cold-Formed Steel Research Group, Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Waterloo is also working with Professor Boake as the project's structural engineering consultant. Both professors are joined by the CSSBI General Manager, Steven R. Fox, PhD, P.Eng., who represents CSSBI members, many of which consist of SBS manufacturers. "Steel, as a construction material, has many environmental benefits already realized in SBS buildings around the world." says Dr. Fox. "We're trying to help the Canadian industry move beyond green. This CN-SBS project should create and collect data that building designers need to push our building infrastructures toward carbon neutrality. This whole process is only the beginning." he adds.

The CN-SBS project is an ongoing endeavor that will carry through into 2010. A website dedicated to this project has been launched at www.cn-sbs.cssbi.ca. There you will be able to find the project scope and as it progresses, more and more project details and updates until the final results are released. This is a website you will want to visit often to find out what updates have been posted. To obtain more information on the CSSBI, sheet steel products, or the CN-SBS Project, visit www.cssbi.ca.