

The "Sustainable Interiors Showroom" (SIS)

Managers trying to feel their way through green purchasing requirements can walk on, touch, sit in and try environmentally friendly products in a year-long demonstration. The Sustainable Interiors Showroom, a demonstration of sustainable choices for products commonly needed in building interiors, opened its doors at the Hazardous Materials Control Center (HMCC) on Earth Day. It is designed to support the installation's drive to achieve zero net waste by 2025. HMCC Manager, Mr. Dan Cline stated, "This program will reduce the largest amount of solid waste that Fort Lewis pays to get rid of – furniture and flooring."

Showroom visitors can experience sustainable products and get information to help streamline their purchasing processes while satisfying multiple vendor bid and green purchasing requirements. "We can see the commitment to sustainability, specifically the purchase of sustainable products, being spread throughout the installation's directorates," said Col. Steven Perrenot, director of Public Works. "The Directorate of Logistics' undertaking of the [sustainable interiors] showroom fits perfectly into our Installation Sustainability Program."



Just one of the many examples of sustainable workstations set up at the demonstration.

A number of U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) vendors provided the products on display, including green office work stations, alternative flooring materials and wall paint containing no volatile organic compounds. An interior design company, Wille, Inc., worked with the other vendors to

ensure the completed display area was both functional for the Directorate of Logistics and Directorate of Public Works employees who work there, and conveyed an integrated look and feel. Wille founder, Ms. Robin Wille stated, "Specifically, we focused on the government customer and the sustainable goals for Fort Lewis. We wanted to highlight elements that delivered good value, considered lifecycle costs, longevity, manufacturer warranties, and were readily available on GSA contract."

The administrative area of the HMCC, a joint Directorate of Public Works and Directorate of Logistics operation, was designed utilizing GREENGUARD® indoor air-quality certified modular workstations that allow for quick and easy reconfiguration; are manufactured from materials emitting zero or minimal toxins; and are either manufactured entirely from recycled materials or are, themselves, recyclable.

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Samples of carpet tiles on display

Carpet tiles are the primary alternative flooring on display. Fort Lewis began testing the tiles in 2003. Because each tile can be pulled up individually and cleaned or replaced as needed, tiles reduce the need to throw away an entire room full of carpet when only a portion of it is worn out, discolored or otherwise damaged. In addition, the ability to clean individual tiles (often on-site using ordinary soap and water) reduces maintenance costs. And when the entire carpet does need an annual cleaning, large buildings such as Fort Lewis' David L. Stone Education Center no longer need to close their facility because the environmentally friendly cleaning process is dry.

More durable than traditional furniture, these sustainable products usually come with warranties of 10 or more years. Long warranties mean vendors will come on-site and make repairs, reducing the practice of discarding furniture that is missing parts but is otherwise in good repair. Members of the Fort Lewis' Installation Sustainability Program staff continue to expand their outreach efforts by looking for new and innovative ways to both educate the public about the installation's long range sustainability goals, and remove barriers to changing the traditional, less sustainable practices.