

March 10, 2011
GS-03-2-2011

Contact: Gina Gilliam 215.446.4909
gina.gilliam@gsa.gov

GSA Presents Evergreen Award to Four Innovative Environmentally Friendly Businesses

GSA honors Steelcase Inc., Shaw Industries Group Inc., SimplexGrinnell and Play Mart Inc. for their commitment to the environment.

PHILADELPHIA – The U.S. General Services Administration recently presented the Evergreen Award to Steelcase Inc., Shaw Industries Group Inc., SimplexGrinnell and Play Mart Inc.

The annual Evergreen Award Program was developed in 1998 by GSA's Integrated Workplace Acquisition Center to recognize the efforts of partners who do business in an environmentally friendly way.

Twenty-five businesses were considered for the 2010 Evergreen Award. The award was presented to one business in each of the following categories: furniture, furnishings and floor coverings, technologies and electronics, and sports and recreation.

"These companies have done an outstanding job of making environmentally friendly options available to our federal customers and are committed to helping us reduce waste and save taxpayer dollars," said Regional Administrator David H. Ehrenwerth. "We are honored to partner with companies that help us to green the government's supply chain while creating a more sustainable environment and building a greener future."

Steelcase Inc., a global furniture manufacturer in Grand Rapids, Mich., received the 2010 Evergreen Award under the furniture category. The company has made reductions in waste-to-landfill by more than 2,000 tons, reductions in waste-to-incineration by nearly 300 tons, reductions in scrap veneer by 200 tons, and reused sawdust by 252 tons. Steelcase has also composted nearly 173 tons and diverted more than 3,500 furniture items from landfills.



Shaw Industries Group Inc., a full-service flooring company in Dalton, Ga., received the 2010 Evergreen Award under the furnishings and floor coverings category. Shaw continues to take industry-leading strides toward sustainability, which include delivering the one-billionth square foot of EcoWorx, a PVC-free carpet backing and saving its 150,000th barrel of oil by recycling 250 million pounds of carpet back into the company's Evergreen facility. This prevented its 400 millionth pound of carpet that reached the end of its useful life from entering landfills.



SimplexGrinnell, a fire- and life-safety company in Boca Raton, Fla., received the 2010 Evergreen Award under the technologies and electronics category. SimplexGrinnell has instituted new approaches to packaging and shipping its flagship Simplex® fire alarm panel. Steel bracing had been used to protect the panel bays during shipping. The steel bracing ultimately made the packages heavy and required more fuel to transport, contributing about 48 tons of steel into the waste stream, as the bracings were typically thrown away upon receipt. SimplexGrinnell has since changed the bracing to a lighter yet sturdy and biodegradable fiberboard product to protect the panel bays. The company has reduced the amount of packaging materials by one-third. In 2010, SimplexGrinnell added 200 hybrid vehicles to its service fleet, working toward a goal of having hybrid vehicles make up 25 percent of its fleet.



Play Mart Inc., a manufacturer of recycled plastic commercial playground equipment in Somerset, Ky., received the 2010 Evergreen Award in the sports and recreation category. Play Mart manufactures 100 percent recycled plastic playground equipment and site amenities, diverting millions of jugs and bottles from landfills annually. Almost all of the company's manufacturing waste and more than 75 percent of the company's operation waste is recycled. The Take Back Program ensures that the company's products don't go to landfills but are reused and recycled. In 2010, Play Mart also eliminated its standard shop lighting and replaced it with an energy-efficient system of zoned and motion-detected fluorescent lighting. This change has provided an energy savings of nearly 7,000 kilowatt-hours per month, which is equivalent to providing energy for 20 three-bedroom houses annually.



The Evergreen Award itself closes the recycling loop in that it is made from recycled glass, said Ehrenwerth. The award sets a high standard for other business partners to follow and is a wonderful example of how the federal government and businesses can work together. GSA remains committed to building partnerships with businesses that provide services and products that are environmentally sensitive and demonstrate its leadership in sustainability, he said.

###

As the federal government's workplace solutions provider, the U.S. General Services Administration works to foster an effective, sustainable and transparent government for the American people. GSA's expertise in government workplace solutions include:

- Effective management of government assets including more than 9,600 government-owned or leased buildings and 215,000 vehicles in the federal fleet, and preservation of historic federal properties;
- Leveraging the government's buying power through responsible acquisition of products and services making up approximately 14 percent of the government's total procurement dollars;
- Providing innovative technology solutions to enhance government efficiency and increase citizen engagement; and,
- Promoting responsible use of federal resources through development of governmentwide policies ranging from federal travel to property and management practices.