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April 29, 2008

Los Angeles, CA

For immediate release:

READY TO GREEN YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR WALLET?

THE SILVER LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GREEN COMMITTEE AND M&A TEAM UP WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO FIGHT POLLUTION AND ENERGY INEFFICIENCY

In alliance with the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) Storm Water pollution prevention initiative, a local research center, Materials & Applications (M&A), has joined forces with the Silver Lake Chamber of Commerce (SLCC) Green Committee to present a set of guidelines and workshops for small businesses. The workshops are being held at a Silver Lake business, All Shades of Green, where the changes taught in the class will be installed as part of the class over the first three Saturdays of May. These workshops and the basic concepts they teach will encourage designers, architects, and property owners to think creatively about solving challenges in the urban environment in highly efficient ways. A bilingual brochure in English and Spanish is available at M&A and at the workshops. To enroll and to find out more, visit: www.emanate.org/sss.

The stated goal of the workshops is to diminish the amount of water that flows off urban properties and into the storm drains - where it then flows down the Los Angeles River and into the ocean. In times of peak flow, the river carries 183,000 cubic feet of polluted water per second out to the Pacific Ocean - 14 times the flow of NY's Hudson River.¹ It can reach speeds of up to 45 miles per hour, leaving no chance for pollutants to settle out in the river before hitting the bay.

The workshops' second goal is to assist local businesses to prepare for new energy-saving requirements for commercial buildings. On December 5, 2007, the California Energy Commission unanimously adopted the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) plan for achieving zero net energy residential buildings by 2020 and commercial buildings by 2030. "The Energy Commission endorses these ambitious goals and will, with support from the CPUC and the utilities, strive to achieve them through successive cycles of the building standards and appliance standards in combination with other program efforts," according to The Committee Final Report.²

It is surprising but true that its not cars, planes, or farms that are the biggest consumers of energy across the nation, the biggest consumers are our homes and businesses. When the annual energy required to operate residential, commercial, and industrial buildings is combined with the embodied energy (the amount of fuel it takes to manufacture the materials) of industry-produced building materials such as carpet, tile, glass, and concrete, buildings are exposed as the largest energy-consuming and greenhouse-gas-emitting sector.³ We have unknowingly built ourselves into a corner.

¹ Source: www.theriverproject.org.

² Source: www.architecture2030.com.

³ As described on www.architecture2030.com. Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration.

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In response to these alarming facts about the way we currently live and work, M&A has been contracted through the EAD to produce a series of workshops that will teach property owners, architects, designers, and students what simple changes can be made that will not only reduce the amount of polluted runoff from a property, but also will improve the resource efficiency of the property. The format of these workshops a replicable program whose ideas can be propagated in various media and venues.

One solution that will be covered in the M&A workshops is how – and when - to build green roofs and walls. Several years ago, Chicago identified the urban heat island effect as the main culprit in heatwave deaths and blackouts. In response to a heat wave that left over 500 people dead in a five day period, the city of Chicago now has more acreage of green roof than any other city in the USA. Heat islands are caused by the concentration of buildings and pavement in urban areas, which tend to absorb more heat in the day and radiate less heat at night into their immediate surroundings than comparable rural sites. Therefore, built-up areas get hotter and stay hotter. Green roofs reduce the heat island effect and also act as insulation, therefor a building needs less heat in the winter and less a/c in the summer. Another benefit is that they absorb storm water, reducing and slowing the runoff. All the solutions that M&A promotes have multiple benefits – so that we get the most bang for the buck!

Jenna Didier is the Principal of Fountainhead Water Systems Design (www.fountainhd.com) and the Director of the non-profit research center, Materials & Applications (www.materialsandapplications.org), located at 1619 Silver Lake Boulevard.

All workshops will be at **All Shades of Green:**

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<http://www.allshadesofgreen.net/>

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