

In Pursuit of Transparency: How to Specify the Right Products

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ABSTRACT

Transparency is the new goal of the green building industry. However, it is significantly harder to apply to our practice, as chemicals of concern are ubiquitous in the building materials that we traditionally specify. Our presentation will focus on how project teams can vet green materials based on our experience with Living Building Challenge (LBC) projects. We will emphasize the importance of educating (and obtaining buy-in from) the design team, contractors, and suppliers when pursuing material transparency. At the same time, we will consider what impediments exist to specifying the "ideal" materials. We will then guide attendees through our approach to researching specific types of products, using examples from a handful of specification sections. In conclusion, we will talk about different resources for project teams pursuing the Living Building Challenge Materials petal, as well as for teams pursuing the LEED V4 materials credits.

BIOGRAPHY

Don has extensive experience with the LBC certification framework, guiding clients from schematic design to completion. He has worked with countless manufacturers to specify products that meet the stringent requirements of LBC's "Red List," as well as LBC sourcing requirements. As a civil engineer, he has over 20 years of infrastructure project experience in the public and private sectors.

Lisa has been engaged on a variety of LEED projects providing support for design teams across LEED credit categories. Recently she's been delving into product descriptions, MSDS, and working with manufacturers to help them understand transparency requirements. Previously she worked in the public policy realm for environmental advocacy organizations.