



The Construction Product Sustainability Information Reporting Guide

Introduction:

GreenFormat[™] is a new CSI Format that will allow manufacturers to accurately report the sustainability-measuring properties of their products, and provide designers, constructors and building operators with basic information to help meet 'green' requirements. Here's how it works:

- Construction product manufacturers complete an online *GreenFormat* reporting questionnaire that collects the sustainable information about their product.
- Data from the questionnaires is displayed in a standardized fashion designed to ease sustainable design decision-making.
- Access to both will be provided through www.greenformat.com.

Those using the website will be able to print reports on specific products based on their queries within the database.

General Organizational Structure:

Sustainable information reported in *GreenFormat* is grouped into categories, each containing individual topics and questions about product sustainability. The categories are organized with topics more likely to be important to design decisions first. This flexible structure will adapt to anticipated changes in the industry. As sustainability issues evolve, new topics and questions will be added in the appropriate category, and existing topics and questions that become obsolete or change will be dropped if necessary. The structure can be applied to all construction products and product categories.

GreenFormat Category Summary

- **Categories 1, 2, and 3** are general, used to categorize the information by *MasterFormat* number, manufacturer's name, product name or trade name (with a manufacturer's brief description of the product), and date the information is provided. This allows manufacturers the flexibility to describe either standard products or unique products. Users can search this information by *MasterFormat* number, by manufacturer name, by trade name, or by keyword. It is flexible enough to also link to *UniFormat* and *OmniClass* classification systems.
- **Category 4 - Regulatory Agency Sustainability Approvals** asks the manufacturer which regulatory agency approves the product meets and the date the product was last approved. This allows the design professional to search the database for products that are approved for use by various regulatory agencies. As more regulations come into effect, this section will expand.
- **Categories 5, 6, and 7** address three of the four methods of specifying - Category 5 for a reference standard specification, Category 6 for a performance specification, and Category 7 for a descriptive specification. The fourth method of specifying, the proprietary method, would use the information presented in Categories 2 and 3.
- **Category 5 - Sustainable Standards and Certifications** relates to the information a specifier would include in the Quality Assurance article of a specification, and it provides verification of environmental claims. This unique and important section of *GreenFormat* relates to the Quality Assurance article in CSI's *SectionFormat* and is necessary if the specifier is writing a reference standard specification. The information provided in this category allows the specifier to search for a product based on its meeting a sustainable standard.

- **Category 6 - Sustainable Performance Criteria** relates to the product's sustainable performance, and would be of interest when writing a performance specification or when a product's performance is being evaluated or compared to other products.
- **Category 7 - Sustainable Composition of Product** relates to what the product is made from, as well as material off-gassing. This is descriptive information and would be used when writing a descriptive specification, or when researching the composition of a product.
- **Categories 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12** relate generally to the five phases of a construction material's life cycle, which a design professional evaluates when selecting a sustainable product. It is not an attempt to collect all the information necessary to perform the life cycle analysis of a product, but only to categorize the most important and most commonly asked sustainability questions that relate to a product's lifespan. These are generally recognized categories used by the sustainability community, categorized and named following the construction phases used in CSI's *Project Resource Manual (PRM)*.
- **Category 8 - Material Extraction and Transportation** relates to the embodied energy within the raw materials that make up a product and the greenhouse gasses emitted into the environment as a result of material extraction and transportation to the manufacturing plant. This category will evolve in the future as more detailed information on greenhouse gas emissions becomes available.
- **Category 9 - Manufacturing Phase** relates to the sustainability of the manufacturing facilities and processes and their effect on the environment. Questions relate to manufacturers' verifiable commitment to sustainability, actions they have taken, and the byproducts produced as a result of their manufacturing process.
- **Category 10 - Construction Phase** relates to sustainable issues during the construction phase. These include construction waste management, indoor air quality during construction, and contract closeout issues such as final cleaning, testing and balancing, and commissioning. The answers to these questions can be incorporated into contract document specifications under Part 3 - Execution. This information is relevant for all buildings - not just sustainable construction.
- **Category 11 - Facility Operations Phase** relates to the durability and life span of the product, and cleaning, maintenance, and facility operation issues. This information informs the designer, the owner, and the facility manager in selecting products with long life and low maintenance.
- **Category 12 - Deconstruction / Recycling Phase** relates to how products are processed after their useful life in the building. Material reuse and recycling have positive effects on manufacturing and construction activities by lessening the use of virgin materials. Questions in this category relate to manufacturer and industry recycling programs, product reuse, recycling options, and disposal options.
- **Category 13 - Additional Information** allows manufacturers to provide any additional information they want to share about their company's environmental policy or programs, other environmental groups that also list their products, or other environmental information they want to share.
- **Category 14 - Certification** is an assurance to *GreenFormat* users that the information provided by the manufacturer is true and correct and has the company's official endorsement behind it. Also included is a request for a manufacturer technical contact if *GreenFormat* users have questions.

For more information on this new CSI Format visit www.csinet.org/greenformat or www.greenformat.com or call CSI at 800-689-2900.

