

GSA – Incoming

Sustainability Requirements

If you sell or plan on selling to The General Service Administration (GSA), Please be advised that GSA will soon be requiring that all its furniture suppliers are ANSI/BIFMA E3-2010 compliant.

On January 11th at BIFMA headquarters, a meeting was held with Mrs. Linda Valdes Branch Chief of the Engineering Branch at GSA. This branch has the responsibility to establish all of the technical requirements required by GSA. Participating at that meeting, were small and large manufacturers, some live, others on a conference call. Following a Presidential Executive Order for the Government to become greener, GSA came to ask BIFMA how the industry would react should GSA make it mandatory for its suppliers to self certify within 12 months of the official announcement and to be third party certified within 24 months of the initial announcement. The feedback from the group to Linda was that E-3 is becoming a defacto requirement anyways and that it should not have a detrimental impact on the industry.

Earlier on this week you should have received a communication from GSA on this topic asking you for comments. However, given that:

- There is a Presidential Executive Order
- The way this was presented to BIFMA
- The feedback Linda got from the attendance
- This week's communication from GSA to the industry
- There are already 700 products already E-3 certified

I believe it is safe to assume that this will be happening sometime relatively soon.

The fact that going through the motions to comply to E-3 and then complete the auditing process can be a tedious process, I suggest that manufacturers ought to start looking at E-3 certification sooner than later.

For those of you that either deal currently or plan to deal with the Canadian Government, you have already heard that they want to specify environmental attributes. With GSA requiring E-3 which happens to be an industry standard, we suspect this Government will more than likely have similar requirements if not the exact same.

We therefore conclude that companies that deal with GSA or Public Works will have to comply with E-3 shortly.

You can read more about E-3 at: <http://levelcertified.org/>.

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