

Green Notes

REI Boulder Store Receives LEED Gold Rating

SEATTLE, WA—Recreational Equipment, Inc.'s prototype store in Boulder, Colorado, was recently awarded LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The remodeled and expanded Boulder location reopened in the fall of 2007. "The design and construction of our Boulder store has allowed REI to test innovative technologies and concepts, pushing the co-op to a new level of sustainability," said Brian Unmacht, REI's executive vice president of sales, store development and logistics. "Receiving LEED Gold certification from USGBC reaffirms our efforts to better align our facilities and operations with our commitment to being good environmental stewards." The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a voluntary national certification program for sustainable buildings. Some of the Boulder store's sustainable features include: Solatubes that channel natural light throughout the store, coupled with a system that dims or turns off fluorescent lights during the day; a photovoltaic system that generates electricity through imbedded silicon solar cells; a solar hot water system that meets 70 percent of the store's hot water needs; plumbing fixtures that reduce water use by more than 30 percent; and shower facilities, bike storage and incentive programs to encourage employees to use alternative means of transportation. The Boulder store joins REI Portland, the first retail store in the country to earn a LEED Gold rating for Commercial Interiors.

League Recognizes Responsible Companies

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Some 34 businesses were recently recognized for promoting bicycling as an easy option for transportation. The League of American Bicyclists launched its Bicycle Friendly Businesses program last year to honor businesses that are socially responsible and provide employees with healthy, happy and green workplaces. "Businesses across the nation are rising to the challenge of reducing their carbon footprint and improving the health of their employees," said Andy Clarke, president of the League. "We are excited to be able to provide the roadmap to help achieve both these goals." BFB award designees provide such amenities as secure bike parking and shower facilities as well as incentives to commute by bike, company bike rides and clubs, and Bike to Work Week promotions. BFB businesses are categorized into Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum categories. This year's list includes a diverse set of companies such as bike shops, banks, law firms, medical centers, hotels and beer brewers and far surpassed last year's list of 13. For the full list, go to www.bicyclefriendlybusiness.org.

City of Boston Elects Greener Transportation

BOSTON, MA—Boston officials are accepting proposals for a bike-sharing program that would make available 1,500 bikes throughout 150 stations, according to *The Boston Globe*. The program could potentially eliminate up to 315,000 car trips a year, and would reduce 750 tons of greenhouse gases, the newspaper reported. The Metropolitan Planning Commission, the city's partner in the project, issued the request for proposals last month. Officials hope to institute a simple and self-financed system, where a bike can be released through the swipe of a card. Officials hope the program could expand to eventually include 6,000 bikes at 600 stations beyond Boston's metropolitan area.

Zeal Optics Grows Sustainable Eyewear Line

BOULDER, CO—Zeal Optics has added three frame styles made from up to 30 percent recycled nylon to its eyewear lineup. The eyewear company now offers six frames as well as goggle straps and carrying cases made from recycled plastic. Aside from being made from recycled materials, the new styles also mean "less waste in the long run," according to Michael T. Jackson, owner and designer of Zeal Optics. The Tenacity, Fuzion and Sustain feature Zeal's exclusive ZB-13 polarized lens for all-day use, eliminating the need for multiple lenses and therefore reducing waste, clutter and their environmental impact.