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Building Materials Go From Trash to Treasure Conference to teach recycling and re-use of construction and demolition waste

MADISON, Wis.— The steel and concrete skeletons of new buildings all around Madison might lead you to believe that construction is the talk of the town. But it's just the opposite—deconstruction—that will have the attention of an international audience next week at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The 2007 Building Materials Reuse Association (BMRA) Conference on Deconstruction, Building Materials Reuse, and C&D Recycling will bring together eco-conscious professionals from many industries May 14-16, 2007 at the Memorial Union.

“Anyone interested in materials reuse and recycling will find opportunities for learning and discussion at the conference,” says Dr. Robert Falk, research engineer at the US Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) and conference chairman. “The agenda covers the full spectrum of building materials conservation.”

Deconstruction, the dismantling of structures for the salvage and re-use of building materials, has been a major area of research for Falk, who is co-author of a Fine Homebuilding book on the subject titled Unbuilding: Salvaging Architectural Treasures from Unwanted Houses to be unveiled at the conference.

Forty speakers are scheduled to present on topics including how to start a re-use store, Hurricane Katrina salvage, commercial and military deconstruction, abandoned house deconstruction, asphalt shingle recycling, and the structural re-use of salvaged lumber, according to Falk.

Wisconsin is well represented at the conference by many area businesses that specialize in building materials re-use. Among others, David Waisman of the Madison Environmental Group will present a case study of the re-use and recycling of materials from Meriter Hospital construction projects and Tom Holmes of Glenville Timberwrights in Baraboo will discuss his business of timber framing using reclaimed materials.

In addition to lectures and discussions, attendees will have an opportunity for certification in materials re-use during two full-day certification training workshops; BMRA Accreditation in Building

Deconstruction and WasteCap Wisconsin Accreditation in Construction and Demolition Recycling will be conducted at the Forest Products Laboratory on Thursday, May 17, 2007.

University of Wisconsin art students are adding an aesthetic touch to the event, showcasing furniture constructed from reclaimed materials. Attendees will also find exhibits by industry representatives such as deconstruction consultants, tool manufacturers and environmental service providers.

Sponsors of the conference include BMRA, FPL, WasteCap Wisconsin, The Reuse People, Madison Environmental Group, and Stanley Tools.

For more information, visit <http://www.union.wisc.edu/bmra/index.html>.

The U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory was established in 1910 in Madison, Wis., with the mission to conserve and extend the country's wood resources. Today, FPL's research scientists work with academic and industrial researchers and other government agencies in exploring ways to promote healthy forests and clean water and improve papermaking and recycling processes. Through FPL's Advanced Housing Research Center, researchers also work to improve homebuilding technologies and materials. Information is available at FPL's Web site: www.fpl.fs.fed.us.

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