



News Release

Watson Furniture to Receive 2002 Governor's Pollution Prevention & Sustainable Practices Award

SEATTLE, Sept. 18– Watson Furniture is one of six businesses and government facilities to be honored by Governor Gary Locke and Department of Ecology Director Tom Fitzsimmons at the Seattle Convention Center on September 18, 2002 for preventing pollution and using business practices that are “sustainable” – meeting business needs successfully, without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention & Sustainable Practices are issued to businesses and government agencies that have found ways to offer services and make products while generating less or no hazardous waste, and to conserve vital resources such as energy and water. This is the ninth year of the awards.

Watson Furniture of Poulsbo was one of the 2002 winners.

Watson Furniture Group manufactures innovative office and public safety workstations and storage systems at their facility on Bainbridge Island. Their manufacturing processes, materials, products and facilities are designed and operating around sustainable development and corporate responsibility. These policies have produced greater operating efficiencies, as well as environmental benefits.

Watson Furniture Group has significantly reduced its use of toxic substances and the possible release of volatile organic compounds by changing many of their manufacturing processes. They:

- replaced solvent-based adhesives with non-toxic, water-soluble adhesives;
- replaced spray painting with powder coating; and
- clean metal parts with a closed-loop pressurized system.

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They have invested in new equipment that allows them to increase their efficiency while decreasing wood scrap. Their particleboard comes from certified sustainable sources and is made of 100 percent reclaimed post-industrial waste. All scrap metal is recycled. They buy materials that have recycled content and are recyclable, including fabrics with 100 percent recycled or reclaimed materials. They sought out a shipping vendor who would work with them on durable packaging and now ship their products in reusable blanket wraps.

Their new manufacturing facility, The Orchard, was designed to coexist with and enhance nearby wetlands and Jump Off Joe Creek, a salmon stream. Their on-site septic system for domestic gray and black-water was designed to preserve the integrity of the wetlands and creek. Runoff at the facility goes into a vegetation-lined catch basin and is naturally filtered before release into the watershed.

Watson Furniture Group believes that "good environmental practices are not so much a process of re-inventing, but of commitment."

This year's winners were selected from 45 applicants. Businesses competed against comparably sized companies, and government agencies are judged separately.

The entries were judged by a panel of experts, including past award-winners, pollution prevention experts, and representatives from labor, and environmental groups. Emphasis was placed on facilities that demonstrated the greatest innovation, and also reached out to others in their industry or community, teaching about preventing pollution and using sustainable business practices

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For more information, or to receive a copy of photographs from the award ceremony, call Anchana Bergeson at (360) 407-6609