

Home Furnishings Business

SFC Names 3 Silver Retailers

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The [Sustainable Furnishings Council](#) has named three furniture retailers qualifying for Silver Exemplary Status for commitment to sustainability in their operations.

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Those retailers are [Room & Board](#), Minneapolis; [Circle Furniture](#), Acton, Mass.; and online retailer [NATeco](#).

Room & Board has 12 stores ranging from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. Specializing in contemporary design, Room & Board was a founding member of the SFC. The retailer source more than 85 percent of its products domestically, utilizes skylights and motion-activated lights at distribution centers and is converting all stores to LED lighting.

Circle Furniture is a five-store Boston-area chain also specializing in contemporary. Circle was the first area retailer to institute a recycling program; 30 percent of its case goods have a low-VOC, eco-friendly finish; and 50 percent of inventory is manufactured within a 500-mile radius.

NATeco is an online dealer of eco-friendly furniture run by Tom Menga, a long-time manufacturer and importer of sustainable goods. Twenty percent of its products use certified wood, another 20 percent are GreenGuard certified, and Menga himself earned his accreditation as a certified GREENleader.

In August, the SFC announced a revised Retailer Standard following months of intensive effort by a committee of members. The new standard was based on the template of the highly successful U.S. Green Building Council's LEED model which recognizes levels of Silver, Gold and Platinum Exemplary

performance based on points earned in a menu list of possible choices. Performance measures taken into account in the new SFC Exemplary Retailer Standard include wood sourcing, use of reclaimed materials, energy conservation, on-site recycling programs, training and education. It recognizes those companies who are already employing a variety of sustainable practices, giving consumers a sign of assurance.

"Room & Board has a long standing philosophy to protect our world and our resources," said Room & Board Vendor Resource Manager and SFC Vice President Steve Freeman. "We have always made the majority of our products from sustainably harvested woods and materials and we adopt new technology and materials/products/finishes when it proves to offer the level of quality and value our customers expect. We continually strive to buy from domestic US sources whenever it makes sense. Room & Board is thrilled to be a founding member of SFC and we continue to support its efforts. Room & Board is excited to be one of the first retailers to be recognized as Silver Exemplary and will continue our work to improve our contribution to sustainability."