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**USGBC Draft Report Shows Vinyl Building Products
Have Comparable Impacts to Products Made of Competing Materials**

***Expert Group Recommends No Credit for Eliminating Vinyl
Or 'Any Particular Material'***

ARLINGTON, Va., Dec. 22, 2004 -- A new draft report from the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) PVC Task Group finds that the environmental and health impacts of vinyl used in building products are comparable to those of competing materials, the Vinyl Institute said today.

The Task Group, which for nearly two years studied vinyl and some of the principal competing building product materials, recommended against a credit for excluding vinyl in the LEED rating system, stating that "the available evidence does not support a conclusion that PVC is consistently worse than alternative materials on a life cycle environmental and health basis." The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system is one of the most popular, fastest-growing rating systems for "green" building in use today.

Neither vinyl nor any competing material deserves to be eliminated based on the current body of knowledge, according to the Task Group.

Tim Burns, president of the Vinyl Institute said, "This report shows a great amount of detailed analysis. We will study the report in depth, but our preliminary sense is that the Task Group took a comprehensive scientific approach. The findings appear to be consistent with those from other studies such as the European Commission's recent *Life Cycle Assessment of PVC and of Principal Competing Materials*, which found vinyl's environmental impacts to be similar to those of competing materials."

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The Task Group acknowledged that data gaps exist and pointed out that additional research needs to be done on the risks associated with competing materials. Burns said, "We appreciate the fact that data gaps exist, and our industry remains committed to developing scientific information to address questions that affect decisions about using vinyl. We are confident that additional research will help architects, designers, builders and homeowners further appreciate vinyl's benefits."

The PVC Task Group was formed in 2002 by USGBC to evaluate the environmental and health performance of vinyl as a building material in four product areas: drain/waste/vent pipe, windows, siding and flooring. The Task Group has reviewed thousands of studies on vinyl and competing materials. The report finds some uses of vinyl have greater impact while others have less impact.

The Task Group's findings combine life-cycle and risk-assessment analyses.

"Available evidence shows that vinyl products can contribute to the environmental performance of sustainable buildings," Burns said. "Whether it is the energy savings provided by vinyl windows or the resource conservation of durable products like pipe, siding and flooring, vinyl has a place in 'green' buildings."

USGBC invites comments on the report, which are due Feb. 15.

The report is available at USGBC's web site for the Task Group review,
http://www.usgbc.org/Docs/LEED_tsac/USGBC_TSAC_PVC_Draft_Report_12-17-04..pdf

Founded in 1982, the Vinyl Institute is a national independent trade association representing the leading manufacturers of vinyl plastics, as well as makers of vinyl feedstocks, additives, and film and sheet products.