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## **Western Red Cedar Determined Most Sustainable Building Material**

***New Study Shows Wood Can Improve Environmental Footprint When Used For Decking and Siding***

**VANCOUVER, BC – January 20, 2010** – Western Red Cedar, already lauded for its durability, beauty and value, can now add most environmentally sound siding and decking material to its attributes, according to a newly released life cycle assessment (LCA).

Measured against competitive, alternative non-wood building materials for residential decking and siding applications, the LCA performed by Canada's leading forestry research laboratory, FPInnovations-Forintek, measured the environmental impact of various materials from cradle to grave. The LCA was commissioned by the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association. Complex analysis was conducted on Western Red Cedar, WPC decking, brick, fiber-cement and vinyl against a range of measurables such as resource use, water use, energy use, transportation and waste created. Western Red Cedar substantially outperformed in every category.

"As green building regulations become the standard in building, consumers who previously favored more 'maintenance-free' materials as their siding and decking products of choice will need to consider alternatives such as Western Red Cedar to help lessen their environmental footprint," said John Wagner, a nationally recognized green and sustainability consultant. "Knowing that the LCA proved alternative building materials like WPC decking, brick, fiber-cement, and vinyl create more environmental burden and consume more non-renewable fossil fuel during their life cycles helps me feel confident in recommending Western Red Cedar as the most sustainable building tool for my clients and consumers everywhere."

LCA test results proved:

- Western Red Cedar decking had by far the least environmental impact when compared with both virgin and recycled wood-plastic composite decking products.
- Environmental impact results remained strongly favorable to Western Red Cedar decking even when comparing a "worst case" scenario to a "best case" scenario for composite decking.
- Western Red Cedar siding performed best overall in comparison with vinyl, fiber-cement and brick.

In order to evaluate the environmental impacts of the life cycle stages of siding and decking material alternatives, the life cycle study was modeled as four distinct life cycle stages: resource extraction and manufacturing (cradle to-gate manufacturing), transportation to customer, installation and use, and end-of-life disposition (landfilling). Products were measured and evaluated against six criteria that include information about the environmental impacts associated with a product or service, such as raw

material acquisition, energy use, carbon footprint, emissions to air, soil and water, and waste generation.

“Western Red Cedar has been the leading building product among builders and designers for decades based on its known three key strengths of durability, beauty and value,” said Jack Draper, managing director, Western Red Cedar Lumber Association. “Now there’s a fourth dimension. Consumers like it because it is a natural wood product, authentically sustainable and truly green. This study validates that assertion.”

To find out more information on using Western Red Cedar as a sustainable building tool, or to speak to an industry expert, please visit: [www.wrcla.org](http://www.wrcla.org).

To receive and download a copy of the [LCA Executive Summary, click here.](#)

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**About Western Red Cedar Lumber Association:**

Western Red Cedar Lumber Association (WRCLA) is a Vancouver, B.C. based non-profit association known as "the voice of the cedar industry." Founded in 1954, the association operates architect advisory and technical service programs throughout the U.S. and Canada. It seeks to inspire, inform and instruct architects and consumers about Western Red Cedar, its uses and benefits.

Western Red Cedar is one of nature’s truly remarkable building materials. Not only does it have distinctive beauty, natural durability and centuries of proven performance, Western Red Cedar is the ultimate green product. It produces fewer greenhouse gases, generates less water and air pollution, requires less energy to produce than alternatives and comes from a renewable and sustainable resource. Equally important, Western Red Cedar is carbon neutral. For more information please visit, [www.wrcla.org](http://www.wrcla.org).

**Contact :**

Brian Coddington

Hill & Knowlton

D (509) 744-3350

C (509) 998-1279

[brian.coddington@hillandknowlton.com](mailto:brian.coddington@hillandknowlton.com)