

# IZZYDESIGN GREEN STATEMENT

**Caring about people requires caring for the environment.** izzydesign was founded in 2001 on the belief that human-centered design can impact the lives of people, and ultimately the world. For individuals, this means furniture that is both comfortable and productive. On a broader scale, this includes improving the lives of future generations, like the kids and grandkids that are a part of the izzy family. It's our love for children and hope for the future that drives our respect for the environment. When we think of all the conversations, ideas, and discoveries that lie ahead, it makes us even more committed to doing what we can to ensure a safe, healthy, and sustainable future.

**Making smart decisions about materials and processes.** A big part of how we're ensuring a sustainable future involves seeking and adopting new ways to minimize the impact of izzydesign products on the environment, while continuing to maximize the positive effect our products have on people and the workplace. This requires making smart material and process decisions. For instance, we've always been big proponents of lean manufacturing techniques that reduce materials, waste, space, and energy. Plus we utilize recycled and recyclable materials, use processes that support clean water and air, and adopt energy efficient techniques.

Our choice of materials also ensures a clean, healthy work environment for the people using our products. Since 2006, we have been voluntarily GREENGUARD testing our products to ensure that they meet stringent indoor air quality emission standards. As of June 2007, all of our product lines achieved GREENGUARD Indoor Air Quality certification. In regular English, this means that emissions of formaldehyde, VOC's, and other harmful pollutants meet standards far beyond required levels. (Certain wood options, however, are not included.)

**Designing flexible, durable products with a longer life.** izzy's care for the environment begins long before our products are manufactured. We have established an environmental management system to ensure izzy products are designed and engineered for simplicity, flexibility, and durability. Take our freestanding open office solutions. Because they are light in scale, our products are easily movable and reconfigurable, allowing for maximum user flexibility and reuse. This means that when the needs of an office change, our furniture is capable of changing, too.

By reducing the need for complete replacement, izzydesign products stay in use—and out of the landfill—longer. Avoiding panel-based systems has other human-centered benefits, as well: more natural daylight and outdoor views, plus the freer movement of air through the space. That makes for healthier, happier people.

Even beyond our products' original intended use, we are always busy dreaming up ideas for reusing izzy product in unexpected ways. There's plenty of inspiration for this, from the creativity of children to the workings of nature and the ingenuity of other people we admire. By holding ourselves to the NOTDOT standard (No One Thing Does One Thing), we are focused on versatility as a critical design element. Many of our products even serve more than one purpose within a day, like a storage pedestal that doubles as a guest seat. Our products also scale well from home to office, giving you more options during that a long product life (a storage unit becomes a lovely buffet or TV stand).

Giving people more choices and built-to-order freedom can be good for the environment, too. Our manufacturing agility allows our customers to go above and beyond in their own sustainability efforts. If a customer wants any other green materials (rapidly renewable particleboard, anyone?) to be used for a specific project, we're happy to make it happen.

**Finding a healthy place in our community and world.** Evidence of our green thumb can be found not only in our products, but also in the communities and ecosystems that surround our facilities. Here's an example: Rather than directing storm water runoff from the building and parking lots into the sewer system, we collect it in a charming pond in front of our building, creating a pleasant habitat for "Blue," our resident turtle, and other wildlife. We also use phosphate-free wash systems and minimally-processed water to ensure we continue to minimize our impact on local water systems here, so close to the shores of beautiful Lake Michigan.

In today's world, where talk about "carbon footprints" is typical, location is everything. izzydesign's headquarters and furniture manufacturing facilities are strategically located in West Michigan, the office furniture capital of the world. This means we enjoy a large supply network within a 50-mile radius, which translates to less fuel needed to transport the majority of our materials.

Our seating manufacturing facility is also strategically located in Texas. This area represents a large market share for our seating products, plus close proximity of suppliers, minimizing fuel consumption as our seating is shipped.

## Paying attention to the nitty-gritty details

### *Recycled and recyclable materials:*

All of the particleboard used in our furniture is EPP or SCS certified to contain 100% recycled fiber content. The cold rolled steel used in izzy products contains a high-recycled content. Our product design makes sure that this steel, as well as the extruded aluminum found in our products, can be easily disassembled, separated and recycled at your local recycling facility at the end of the product life.

### *Finishes:*

Water-based coatings are used to finish all veneered products, which mean you get all of the durability, wear and scratch resistance of traditional catalyzed coating, without the high VOC's (volatile organic compounds) associated with traditional wood finishing methods. That means a safer work environment for employees.

### *Glue:*

For laminating, we use only water-based PVA (poly vinyl acetate) adhesives. These also reduce VOCs, in comparison with typical solvent-based adhesives.

### *Powder Coat:*

For painted surfaces, we use a solvent-free (VOC-free) powder coat process. This not only keeps the air clean and our employees safe, it also allows excess powder (i.e. over-spray) to be reclaimed and re-used. On top of that, izzy was the first in Michigan and the office furniture industry to use a low phosphate paint line wash system to reduce impacts on local water systems. We've continued this trend by transitioning to a no phosphate paint line wash.

### *Textiles:*

Our textiles collection includes a hip-looking group of eco-responsible, biodegradable fabrics made from post-consumer recycled material. Six patterns and 52 colors give you freedom of choice within the environmental framework.

### *Packaging:*

Our corrugated packaging contains 25%-95% recycled content. Both our corrugated and stretch wrap packaging are 100% recyclable. Another option, blanket wrap, can be specified for truckload shipments, reducing packaging material even more.

### *Literature:*

All of our literature and product catalogs are printed on paper with post consumer recycled content, with aqueous coatings (that's just a fancy way of saying we make sure they're fully recyclable).

### *HÅG Seating:*

One of the things we immediately admired about our Norway-based partner, HÅG, is that company's long history as a European industry leader in environmental stewardship. Not only is HÅG ISO 14001 certified and EMAS registered, environmental product declarations (EPD's) are available on many of its products (and will soon be available on all!). And this detail is super cool: In Europe, when you purchase new seating from HÅG, the company takes back old office chairs, regardless of the manufacturer, at no cost. HÅG also makes many of its polypropylene inner shells from recycled Volvo car bumpers. All of HÅG's seating products are also GREENGUARD certified.

### *Involvement:*

To an effort to keep our environmental knowledge current, while sharing practices and participating in collective efforts in the industry and community, we are active with many organizations, including IIDA, the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, Sustainable Business Forum, BIFMA's Sustainability Committee, the U.S. Green Building Council, and International Aid. As a result, designers increasingly specify izzy products for LEED-certified or -inspired projects, like the West Michigan Environmental Action Council office (Grand Rapids, MI), The Chicago Center for Green Technology (Chicago, IL) and Worcester Vocational High School (Worcester, MA).