FAQ on BIFMA Furniture Sustainability Standard

Frequently Asked Questions by Furniture Industry on ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 Certification

1. What is BIFMA Furniture Sustainability Standard?

ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 Furniture Sustainability Standard addresses all three aspects of sustainability (environmental, economic and social) and includes criteria for evaluating human & ecosystem health, energy, natural resource and corporate social responsibility impacts.

2. Is any system certification needed to apply for BIFMA standards certification?

There is no pre-qualifying requirement of any system certification e.g. ISO systems certification.

3. Which products can be certified under ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014?

Any furniture product can be certified under ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 e.g. Plastic, Wooden, Steel, Glass or any combination of materials, including ready to assemble furniture.

4. Is ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 applicable only to manufacturers?

The standard has Prerequisites & credit point system for "Corporate, Facility & Product". In absence of manufacturing facility, the credit points for facility are lost.

5. Is ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 a product certification or system certification standard?

ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 is product certification standard. However, system certifications viz. ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 have 3 credit points to earn.

6. What is Low Emitting Furniture?

It is a test for VOC emissions from a furniture product as per standards (BIFMA M7.1-20011 and BIFMA X7.1-20011). BIFMA e3-2014 has 3 credit points for VOC emission compliance.

7. Who can guide in BIFMA standard certifications?

Aim Enviro provides comprehensive consultancy including training & guidance for compliance to BIFMA standards. For list of consultants on BIFMA web site use link; http://levelcertified.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2015-01-05-Consultants-List1.pdf

8. What is conformity assessment by Aim Enviro?

Aim Enviro has a team of consultants & auditors trained in ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 and has been extending assistance to furniture sector by issuing second party (interested party) certification after compliance verification.

9. What is third party certification?

level™ is the third-party certification programme for BIFMA e3-2014. The accreditation for third party certification bodies is given by American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

10. What is the validity period for BIFMA e3-2014 certification?

Recertification after 3 years or in case of changes in the product certified is required.

11. What is the frequency of the Surveillance audits?

Surveillance audits are not mandatory under BIFMA e3-2014. However, yearly audit shall help in readiness for certification of further products.

12. Which LOGO can be used for the certified furniture product under BIFMA e3-2014?

Only 'Level Certified' and level® logo can be used, which is a trade mark protected logo by BIFMA.

13. Are furniture products certified under BIFMA e3-2014, eligible for credits in LEED certification of the buyer?

Architects, designers, facility managers, and business leaders pursuing LEED certification may now be able to earn credit for specifying certified furniture products under the USGBC's new Pilot Credit 80: Environmentally Preferable Interior Finishes and Furnishings – a credit that specifically recognizes products that have been certified to the ANSI/BIFMA e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard.

14. How the buyer of furniture products certified under BIFMA e3-2014,is benefited in LEED certification?

As part of Pilot Credit 80, all level certified furniture products may contribute to LEED certification credits based on a sliding percentage scale for level 1, 2, or 3 product conformance tiers. A project must include at least five different certified products that account for at least 50% of the total interior finishes and furnishing materials by cost (Source: USGBC Pilot Credit 80).