

## FSC Wood Products

Perhaps you've wondered what makes a product or material green? These days, green is not only a color, it's a way of life. We hope as you follow our Green Design Tips each week, we can help you with your Green choices for your home and everyday living.

There are several certifications and industry classifications that can be relied on to understand the "green quotient" in the products that you use to make smart decisions for your green home. Perhaps you've seen FSC listed on a wood product. This is the Forest Stewardship Council – FSC – it is an international non-profit organization that sets standards for responsible forest management, wood and wood derivatives. Sustainable forest management ensures that the harvest of timber products maintains the forest's natural diversity, productivity and ecological processes. The FSC certification also allows the end-user to follow the chain of custody on all wood products back to their origin in forests all over the world. When you purchase FSC certified wood, you are paying for the guarantee that the forest from which that wood came from is responsibly managed. In addition to certifying new wood used for furniture, building, and flooring, FSC also certifies reclaimed wood and paper products.

Along with purchasing FSC certified wood furniture, you should also be aware of the harmful chemicals found in some lesser expensive furniture made from MDF – Medium Density Fiberboard. MDF based Furniture release the harmful chemical formaldehyde which is especially dangerous to: Newborn babies, children and adults with respiratory problems and allergies. It can also cause contact dermatitis and irritate the mucous membranes. Whenever you work with MDF, protective gear should be used to protect you from inhaling the harmful wood dust.

**Today's tip:** The greenest (and often the most affordable) furniture you can buy today is "pre-owned." Yard sales, antique shops, classified ads, consignment stores, Grandma's Attic and Craigslist are a few good places to find pre-owned furniture. By purchasing Previously used furniture this green choice includes: saving trees, eliminating new furniture chemical off-gassing, as well as the shipping and packaging materials to name a few. If you still desire new furniture, before purchasing, be sure to check out the green furniture items listed in the [www.GreenHomeGuide.com](http://www.GreenHomeGuide.com) directory.

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