

Upstate Forever Completes New "Green" Headquarters

Renovated Building in Historic District Will Receive Both EarthCraft and LEED Certification

(Greenville, SC) –

Upstate Forever is celebrating its recent move into a renovated "green" office building at 507 Pettigru Street in Greenville. The former residence, constructed in 1916, was badly deteriorated when the nonprofit conservation group acquired it in 2007. The house contained asbestos, termite damage, rotted woodwork, and fire damage, all of which had to be addressed before the renovation work could begin. The end result will serve as a model for sustainable renovation projects throughout the region.

The idea for the project stemmed from Upstate Forever's recent partnership with the Home Builders Association of Greenville on Upstate House, a highly sustainable and energy-efficient new single-family residence. The successful Upstate House project was built in accordance with EarthCraft standards and is located on the same street as the new office.

With the new office project, Upstate Forever strived to achieve for renovation what Upstate House accomplished for new construction. "Two basic principles of sustainability are involved in our project," said Brad Wyche, Upstate Forever's Executive Director. "First, we should reuse existing buildings and structures wherever possible since the greenest building is the one already built. Second, when existing buildings need to be repaired and renovated, that work should be done in a sustainable manner. Every year, countless buildings are renovated, yet sadly very few of these projects are done in a way that reduces energy consumption and environmental impacts."

The group selected architects Scott Johnston and David Anderssen with the Johnston Design Group to re-design the house into a truly "green" workspace. The emphasis on environmentally-friendly materials and processes also results in excellent indoor air quality, making Upstate Forever an exceptionally healthy place to work. "Our new office is a true win-win: for our staff and for the environment," says Wyche. The features and products that make the project truly "green" include solar panels that provide about one-fourth of the office's electrical power; a new roof made of sustainably harvested wood and treated with a non-toxic preservative that prevents decay; Icynene insulation, a spray foam and air barrier system that contains no ozone-depleting substances and

reduces energy bills by 30-50%; an extremely energy-efficient HVAC system that allows us greater precision in heating and cooling the office; reclaimed heart pine flooring from three Upstate textile mills; solar hot water; recycled carpet and tiles; shelving and cabinetry made from wheat and sunflower fibers; low-VOC paints; porous paving; a green roof; native plant landscaping; and rain barrels for irrigation.

Contractors also reused everything they could from the existing house – the bricks from the chimney became a new walkway; the doors and trim were removed, restored and reinstalled; and an old outbuilding was disassembled, carried to the farm belonging to one of the contractors, and rebuilt as a chicken coop. Most of the materials that could not be reused were recycled.

The new office will be certified under both the EarthCraft and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) programs. LEED has four levels of certification: basic, silver, gold, and platinum, based on points earned in meeting a host of sustainability goals. Wyche believes the Upstate Forever office has an excellent chance of receiving certification at the highest level, platinum.

The Upstate Forever office will be open to the public for tours this Saturday, November 22, from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Staff members and architects will be on hand to explain the renovation process and describe the building's green features. Call (864) 250-0500, ext. 21 for more information.