

Dept. of Safety and Professional Services: Announces appointments to new sustainable building council

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Madison, Wis. – Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary-designee Dan Hereth has announced appointments to the Wisconsin Advisory Council on Building Sustainability. This new advisory council will work closely with the Commercial Building Code Council, Uniform Dwelling Code Council, and Plumbing Code Advisory Committee to identify code updates that will expand opportunities for the construction industry to transition toward sustainable materials, systems and practices more quickly and affordably.

Appointees include the following:

Ben Austin, sustainability lead at J.H. Findorff & Son, a commercial contractor in Madison.

Megan Dyer, associate director of GuideHouse energy, sustainability, and infrastructure segment; works with utility clients with a focus on sustainability, resilience, and carbon reduction.

Alan Eber, director of facilities, engineering and energy management for Gundersen Health System in La Crosse.

Scott Hackel, the director of research and innovation at Slipstream, a nonprofit working on energy innovation.

Monika Hermann, a registered architect and associate professor in the Department of Engineering and Technology in the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Management at the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Missy Nergard, director of sustainability for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Victor Nino, the founder of EcoBalance Technologies, a Milwaukee engineering firm that uses innovative technologies with the goal of creating a healthier and more sustainable built environment.

Tim O'Brien, a home builder, serving both Madison and Milwaukee, with a commitment to energy efficient homes, green building practices, and renewable technologies.

Francisco Sayu, director of emerging technology at RENEW Wisconsin, a Madison-area nonprofit working to advance renewable energy.

Keith Swartz, associate director of Elevate Energy, working to provide engineering services related to energy efficiency, sustainability for nonprofit and affordable housing projects.

Christi Weber, director of design for TDS Construction in Madison and a founding member of the Wisconsin Passive House Alliance.

The council will lead efforts to identify ways building code updates can help move the commercial and residential construction industries toward clean energy. Incorporating clean energy priorities directly into building codes is a smart and necessary step toward more resilient communities, Hereth said. "This council has the expertise and experience to create more opportunity for sustainable design and renewable energy and material use in Wisconsin," Hereth said. "I look forward to learning from them as we work together to put more of Governor Tony Evers' [Clean Energy Plan](#) into action."

Innovations in the construction industry are a key component of the plan that calls for a modernization of buildings for moving Wisconsin toward a clean and reliable energy future. In addition to modernizing building codes, Evers' plan calls for funding and support to move toward electrification and other sustainable energy sources.

Wisconsin's Council on Building Sustainability will review all building and construction codes and provide recommendations on changes to increase safety, resiliency, and sustainability. This will include considerations for expanding allowable use of new building materials (e.g. mass timber), expansion of alternative

energy capability, creation of incentives that encourage climate-smart design and construction and other initiatives.

The council held its first meeting on December 5 and elected its officers: Chairperson—Missy Nergard; Vice Chairperson—Francisco Sayu; Secretary—Christi Weber. The 2023 meeting calendar will be finalized and published soon.

About DSPS: The Department of Safety and Professional Services issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, runs the state fire prevention program, and maintains the award-winning Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, the Department of Safety and Professional Services is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.