



Perkins+Will Partners with Healthy Building Network and Google on Material Health and Transparency Tool

[NEWS]

10.13.16

A new tool makes it easier to assess and choose healthy products.

A new web-based tool aims to make it easier for building owners, architects, contractors, and manufacturers to collaborate on assessing and choosing healthy products and materials. Known as [Portico](#), the tool—originally developed by the [Healthy Building Network](#) (HBN) and [Google](#) to help the tech company identify the healthiest products and materials for its offices worldwide—allows users to search and compare materials for human and environmental health hazard information. Perkins+Will, a founding partner of Portico, will be the first architecture and design firm in the world to offer the tool to its clients. Other founding partners include The Durst Organization, Harvard University, and HomeFree Affordable Housing Cohort.

“At Perkins+Will, creating places that promote and nurture health has long been part of our ethos. To that end, transparency into what’s in our building products and materials is critical. It’s why we spearheaded the development of the Perkins+Will [Precautionary List](#) in 2008, and shortly thereafter, launched our [Transparency website](#),” says Perkins+Will CEO [Phil Harrison](#). “Today, we’re proud to be among the founding partners of Portico. We look forward to working with HBN, Google, and others to ensure that safe, healthy, high-performing products are both manufactured and used in place-making projects around the world.”

Portico is designed to integrate with a typical design and construction delivery process, connecting data with project workflow. The tool has three main functions: project management; product research; and product information requests. Users can manage a project by defining criteria, setting goals, and tracking progress. Portico’s growing library of more than 2,500 products are cross-checked against a list of 40,000 known or suspected chemical hazards. Additionally, the tool connects manufacturers and their supply chain directly to users, allowing

users to request more detailed information about specific products, and allowing manufacturers and suppliers to provide it swiftly and easily.

“Portico is a tool that complements our efforts to promote health and material transparency, so we’re thrilled to be one of the first adopters,” says Mary Dickinson, co-director of Perkins+Will’s [Material Performance Research Lab](#) and frequent HBN collaborator. “The tool will make it even easier for our clients to learn what’s in various products, set performance goals for their projects, and evaluate and choose alternative materials that allow them to meet those goals. Being an early adopter of Portico allows Perkins+Will to help build, and have access to, the data we use to make recommendations to our clients.”

Eventually, HBN and Google hope to broaden the number and type of organizations that use Portico to increase transparency in the area of building materials. For the tool’s first release, however, they sought only a small number of partners from the building industry to help evolve and strengthen the tool through an early adoption program. In selecting those partners, a key criterion was a commitment to the mission of building materials health. HBN and Google specifically sought Perkins+Will for the firm’s innovative ideas, broad range of clients, and diversity of market sectors—all of which can help expand the tool’s use and improve it.

For more information, contact media@perkinswill.com.