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## **IKEA Selected as 2006 EnviroStars Recognized Leader**

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**SEATTLE (Oct. 25, 2006)** – EnviroStars has selected IKEA as the 2006 *EnviroStars Recognized Leader* (ERL) recipient. The annual distinction is awarded by the regional business certification program, EnviroStars, to a select group of highly successful businesses that are taking substantial steps towards reducing their environmental footprint in the Puget Sound region and beyond. The award was presented yesterday to IKEA by Executive Ron Sims at the “Salute to the Sound” event hosted by Puget Soundkeeper Alliance.

“IKEA is a global leader in designing a successful business strategy based upon environmental responsibility,” explains King County’s EnviroStars program manager Laurel Tomchick. “Too often, business leaders assume that sustainability is at odds with profitability, and the EnviroStars Recognized Leader distinction seeks to demonstrate that the opposite is actually true – green business is smart business.”

IKEA in Renton is one of two IKEA franchises operating in the US. Owners Anders Berglund and Björn Bayley embody IKEA’s corporate commitment to the environment and fully integrate sustainable elements into the store’s business practices. IKEA has reduced its ecological footprint by:

- Mandating its suppliers adhere to the same strict social and environmental standards through its "IWAY" protocols and audits;
- Closely monitoring hazardous substances used to create the IKEA product line, eliminating a number of high priority chemicals entirely;
- Designing products to minimize waste, energy use, packaging and product transportation;
- Repurposing waste materials to make usable products;
- Producing catalogues from chlorine-free pulp paper;
- Offering customers free recycling for fluorescent lamps, batteries and holiday trees;

- Implementing in-store environmental education activities and encourages customers and coworkers to participate in recycling, Earth Day and other environmental programs.

“As a company, IKEA works extremely hard to minimize or eliminate negative environmental impacts of any kind,” said Berglund. “We find that by implementing these practices, we not only help reduce our environmental footprint, but we also create a strong team ethic, a positive work environment and a healthy bottom line.”

IKEA joins past winners Starbucks Coffee Company and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Recipients of the award act as models, mentors, and catalysts for the spread of environmentally sustainable practices, including the reduction of hazardous waste. EnviroStars taps members of the ERL team to provide guidance, advice and leadership to the local businesses participating in the EnviroStars certification program.

EnviroStars has certified nearly 600 businesses across Puget Sound for properly reducing and managing hazardous waste. Available in Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Pierce and Whatcom counties, businesses are rated between 2- to 5-stars according to their demonstrated commitment to environmentally responsible practices. Compared with similar programs in the western U.S., EnviroStars has attained one of the highest participation figures. The EnviroStars program was recently awarded an MVP2 award by the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable for its commitment success and innovation towards preventing pollution.

For more information about EnviroStars and the EnviroStars Recognized Leader distinction, please visit [www.envirostars.org](http://www.envirostars.org) or call 1-877-220-STAR (7827). For more information on IKEA and its environmental values and strides, please visit [www.ikea.com/ms/en\\_US/about\\_ikea/splash.html](http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/about_ikea/splash.html).

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