

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, April 20, 2011  
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## **EARTH DAY 2011: Family Owned Distributor Unveils Michigan's 1<sup>st</sup> International-Standard 'Green' Beverage Warehouse**

*Griffin Beverage invests locally to reduce energy use, earn LEED certification*

ST. IGNACE – Family owned distributor **Griffin Beverage Co.** has earned the internationally recognized energy efficiency LEED designation for its new warehouse in St. Ignace – Michigan's first LEED-certified beverage distribution warehouse.

**LEED certification** is the recognized standard for measuring building sustainability. The LEED green building rating system – developed and administered by the U.S. Green Building Council, a Washington D.C.-based, nonprofit coalition of building industry leaders – is designed to promote design and construction practices that increase profitability while reducing the negative environmental impacts of buildings and improving occupant health and well-being.

To earn LEED certification, Griffin – serving 41 counties in northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula – used local and recycled materials, worked with local contractors and businesses, and deployed energy efficient devices and techniques at virtually every stage of construction. The warehouse is located at the corner of US-2 and Portage Road, St. Ignace.

“Griffin Beverage has deep roots in our community and our state and we want to do everything we can to protect Michigan's natural resources for generations, while reducing our dependence on imported fossil fuels,” said General Manager **Bob Griffin Jr.** “For Griffin Beverage, saving energy is good for the bottom line as well as our local economy, public health and quality of life. We are proud to do everything we can to reduce our carbon footprint while at the same time partnering with local businesses, suppliers and contractors to protect and create local jobs.”

Griffin Beverage invested around \$1 million in the 20,000-square-foot St. Ignace warehouse. They worked hand in hand with the East Lansing-based architectural firm Bergmann Associates, with the focus on making the building as energy efficient as possible. The following are some of the techniques Griffin deployed to make its warehouse earn the LEED certification:

- The warehouse was sited on a location to minimize excavation and maximize natural drainage.
- Builders used locally sourced and recycled materials virtually throughout the facility.
- Griffin used paints, adhesives and other materials with low volatile organic compounds (VOC). Conventional paint contains hundreds of known chemical toxins that pollute the air and endanger public health. By using low-VOC paint, typically containing around half the amount of VOCs in conventional paint, Griffin is also improving the quality and safety of its indoor air.
- New, electric operated forklifts eliminate indoor exhaust emissions.
- The warehouse incorporates low-flow plumbing fixtures to reduce the building's overall water consumption.

- Griffin's new refrigeration system uses safer, less damaging alternatives to chlorofluorocarbon, which has been linked to ozone depletion and serious harm to the atmosphere. Griffin recycled its refrigeration system, retrofitting it with CFC-free refrigerants.
- Griffin partnered with local contractors and businesses throughout the project, such as Miller Construction of West Branch; Warner Plumbing and Heating of Cheboygan; Island Electric of St. Ignace; Huskey Construction of St. Ignace; and many other regional businesses.
- Griffin used polished concrete for the flooring, eliminating the use of carpets and epoxies in the office.
- The windows are recycled from old cooler doors.
- Bob Griffin Jr. himself cut and dried the lumber used for the tongue-and-groove paneling.
- The warehouse features the use of skylights, motion-activated lighting, lighting designed to minimize light pollution, automatic climate controls and low-flow appliances
- The roof is made of a material designed to eliminate heat islands and help reduce impacts on climate change.

Completed in 2010, Griffin's new warehouse earned the LEED certification in March 2011, after commissioning to measure all systems.

With its main office in West Branch, Griffin Beverage delivers beer, wine and other beverages to retailers, taverns, restaurants, stores and other businesses in a geographic region measuring more than 27,000 square miles – around half of Michigan's 58,000-plus-square-mile area. Using a network of strategically located warehouses, Griffin distributes its products to 41 counties, from Flint to Marquette. Griffin's products include Anheuser-Busch-InBev products, as well as Michigan craft beers such as Bell's Brewery and a wide selection of domestic and imported beers. Griffin also distributes wines and Michigan-made Faygo pop, along with other non-alcoholic beverages.

Established in 1967, the two-generation family business is one of Michigan largest recyclers, recycling beverage-related plastics, aluminum, cardboard, glass and paper for the region stretching from the Saginaw area through northern Michigan and far into the Upper Peninsula. Griffin is proud to employ over 180 people at its business, providing well-paying jobs with benefits. Griffin is also very active in the communities it serves; giving back thousands of dollars to local charities supporting community programs every year, humanitarian events and causes such as American Red Cross and Humane Society.

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