

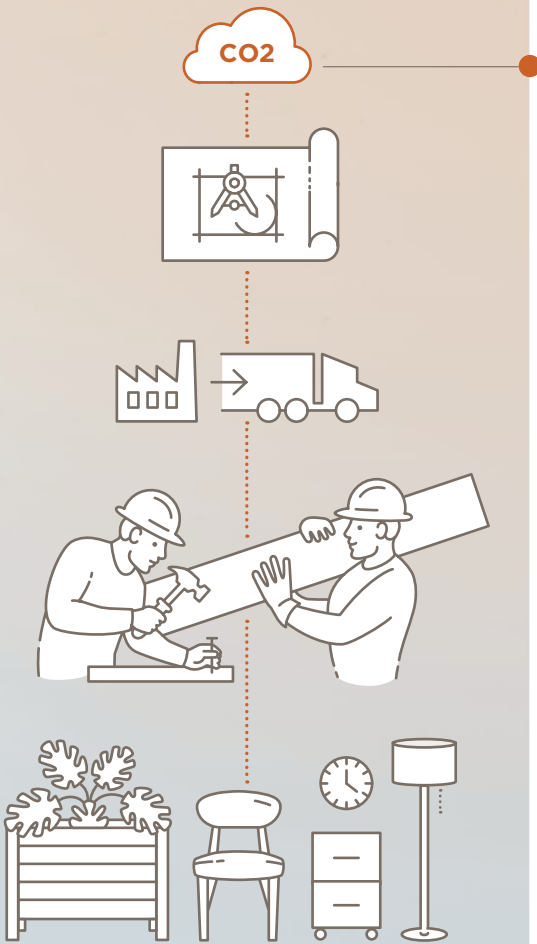


Healthy healthcare interiors:

Strategies for reducing embodied carbon footprint

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Embodied Carbon

Manufacture, transport, & installation of materials and products

According to research done by LMN Architects and the Carbon Leadership Forum, the **embodied carbon footprint** of interiors may be responsible for emissions at least equal to or more than those from the building structure and envelope.

The reason for this is the multiple renovations over a building's lifespan. Currently there are no statistics on how often healthcare buildings undergo interior renovations, but experts estimate at least every 10 years.

Which means that interior designers are in a unique position to improve outcomes for both people and the planet. The most obvious place to start is to choose low-carbon products. To do this, you need to have a different mindset, set clear requirements, and select the right vendors.

Ask your sales rep about:



The **carbon footprint** of the company's products



The **de-carbonization strategy** of the company



The **toxicity** of the company's products

The good news is that many manufacturers are waking up to the fact that this is important to their customers. Many firms, including large ones like Gensler, have established a goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions in their project portfolio by 2030.

Because Gensler is one of the largest specifiers of furniture, fixtures, and equipment, many of the manufacturers the firm works with have started asking for Gensler's reporting requirements for embodied carbon so they can be more responsive to the firm's net zero goal.

So, in 2021, Gensler prepared a series of 20 category-specific prescriptions for its preferred reporting format for embodied carbon, as well as other sustainability credentials. Each prescription is organized into six sections:



Embodied carbon



Product attributes



Low-emitting materials



Energy performance



Material transparency



Environmental & social responsibility

Many designers are already on the journey to reduce the embodied carbon footprint of the interiors they design. But no matter where you are on the journey, it's always useful to keep learning.

The Climate Toolkit for Interior Design developed by *Metropolis* and industry experts in design, construction, and manufacturing is a great resource. It includes a Cheat Sheet with 10 strategies to get started – including things like learning the language of carbon, bringing it up with the team, uncovering creative possibilities, thinking differently about materials, and more. There is also a Get Help section with some great resources for making low-carbon product choices. This toolkit is a living resource and will be updated as new information becomes available.

Sources:

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