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Unico Properties LLC is First Commercial Office Property Owner to Launch Comprehensive Recycling Program in Spokane's Central Business District

Unico Celebrates Earth Day 2009 with Commitment to Recycling and Second Annual "Turn Out the Lights" Hour at Bank of America Financial Center

SPOKANE, Wash. (April 8, 2009) – Unico Properties LLC, a real estate investment and operating company and owner of Bank of America Financial Center (BAFC), a premier Class A, downtown office property in Spokane, Wash, is the first commercial office property owner in the central business district (CBD) to launch a comprehensive recycling program in partnership with the City of Spokane. Unico will offer a complete recycling program for aluminum, plastic and mixed-office paper to all of its tenants at BAFC starting officially on Earth Day, April 22, 2009. While cardboard recycling has always been offered, this is the first time that a commercial property owner is offering a comprehensive recycling program throughout its office building.

As part of the program, Unico is working with James Haynes, an Industrial Recycling Consultant who works with the City of Spokane's Regional Solid Waste System department on the Waste Reduction Assessment Program (WRAP) to determine how much waste Unico would divert from landfills by introducing a recycling program. Unico will use the data gleaned by Haynes along with information gathered from the pilot recycling program that Unico has already started with three of its tenants to make this building-wide recycling program as successful as possible.

"We are committed to building a sustainable future for the City of Spokane and as part of that commitment, we are proud to take the lead in offering a recycling program to our tenants," said Chrissy McCullough, Unico's Property Manager for BAFC and President-Elect of Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA). "While investing in a recycling program and other sustainable operations may require some additional fees upfront, we believe it will reduce our operating costs over the long-term. That's one reason why we're committed to sustainability as an essential business strategy for Unico."

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Additionally on Earth Day 2009, BAFC will celebrate its second annual Unico “turn out the lights” event. Building tenants will again turn off their lights from Noon to 1 p.m. as a symbol of their on-going commitment to energy conservation. The lobby and most common areas will also go dark. As it did on Earth Day 2008, this hour will save approximately 250 kilowatts of energy, enough to power one home for two days.

“Creating a sustainable Spokane requires all of us to work together – government, business and individuals,” said Spokane Mayor Mary Verner. “I would like to extend my congratulations to Unico, which is leading by example with its new recycling program and its on-going efforts to raise awareness on how to save energy and address climate change.”

Located in Spokane’s CBD, the 20-story, 330,000 square foot BAFC represents the CBD’s largest and most prestigious asset. As the first to launch a comprehensive recycling program in the CBD, Unico is working with Susanne Croft, Incentives Specialist with the Business and Development Services Department of the City of Spokane, to promote the City’s Sustainable Management of Assets, Resources and Technology (SMART) Recognition Program. The SMART Business Recognition Program is designed to encourage Spokane businesses to adopt policies and practices that encourage a better work environment, a healthier, more productive workforce, more customers, and an increase in the bottom line.

“Unico’s innovative leadership demonstrates the strong business case for the sustainable business practices that the SMART program was designed to promote. When a flagship traditional office building like the Bank of America Financial Center goes green, we know others are watching and will follow suit,” said Croft. “Unico is taking the lead in helping raise awareness about what businesses can do to conserve resources and to improve our community.”

Unico purchased BAFC in early 2007. As the new owner, Unico made significant capital upgrades to the common areas and elevators and provided a facelift to the lobby entry. Additionally other efforts that Unico is implementing to ensure BAFC functions more efficiently include: replacing all incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL bulbs); using environmentally-friendly products; installing low emissivity window film; installing new heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) controls; using consolidated cleaning times to reduce lighting use; using atrium lighting timers to reduce heavy electricity usage; and adding showers for tenant-use to encourage alternative commuting. These efforts just earned the building an EPA ENERGY STAR® rating in 2009.

“Ensuring a healthy working environment is the driving force in transitioning our industry to building green,” said McCullough. “We want to make our buildings better places to work and to make our tenants more successful by improving their environment.”

“We are conscious of the long-term effect buildings have on our world and we are making continual steps to reduce the environmental impact of our buildings over their entire lifecycle,” added McCullough.



Unico is a real estate investment and operating company headquartered in Seattle, Washington. The company, which owns and operates 10 million square feet of premier properties in the western United States, is an industry leader for green and sustainable building practices. Unico received a 2008 “National Commercial Real Estate Customer Service Award for Excellence” from CEL & Associates, a national, independent real estate consulting firm. The award honors Unico for being the number one ranked firm in its category and in the United States for providing the best customer service throughout its office property portfolio. Unico produces superior returns for its institutional partners by anticipating and addressing the real state needs of its customers with environments that enhance the success of the people, business and communities it serves. For more information about Unico, please visit the firm’s website at www.unicoprop.com.

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