

# PRESS RELEASE

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## GARDERE

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**For Immediate Release**

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## GARDERE BECOMES FIRST TEXAS LAW FIRM TO JOIN ABA-EPA LAW OFFICE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

**DALLAS** – Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP is proud to announce that it has become an ENERGY STAR Partner, making it the first Texas-based law firm to join the ABA-EPA Law Office Climate Challenge.



Developed by the American Bar Association's Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Climate Challenge encourages law offices to become better environmental and energy stewards. Gardere is participating in the Climate Challenge by becoming an ENERGY STAR Partner, committing to reduce energy use in its offices by at least 10 percent.

Gardere also plans to enroll this year in the WasteWise program, which is targeted at reducing paper usage and/or increasing the use of recycled paper.

"The firm's Houston office building already has earned an ENERGY STAR rating, so Gardere is building on this foundation by taking energy efficiency measures in our other offices," according to **Kevin L. Colbert**, Chair of Gardere's Environmental Practice Group and leader of the firm's internal environmental program. To reduce its environmental footprint, the firm is considering such actions as installing energy-efficient lighting upgrades and conducting employee training sessions to address behavioral ways to conserve energy.

Participation in the Climate Challenge is the latest environmental step for Gardere, which last year launched its Climate Change Task Force to help clients adapt to the changing legal and economic dynamics associated with climate change.

"As those familiar with our Climate Change Task Force know, it takes more than just saying you support an initiative," says Gardere Managing Partner **Steve Good**. "If we are to truly be a leader in this emerging arena, we realize the importance of taking tangible steps to reduce energy use in our own offices."

Mr. Good notes that while conservation has become an important issue, too often a company becomes so entrenched in its corporate practices to see the positive impact even simple changes can make. For example, in the case of Gardere, a 10 percent reduction in the use of copier paper alone can result in savings of more than \$10,000 a year. The bottom line savings aren't the only benefit; Gardere also will be saving more than 350 trees per year.

Another measure Gardere is considering includes eliminating non-biodegradable Styrofoam cups from its offices. Gardere's Austin office is piloting a program to replace all Styrofoam with ceramic mugs and plastic drinking glasses. If Gardere implements this program firmwide, it will result in a net savings of approximately \$14,000 per year.

As part of its Climate Challenge participation, Gardere has been working with EarthPeople, LLC, a Dallas-based sustainability consulting firm. Earthpeople assisted Gardere with the preparation of its 2007 Sustainability Report, the firm's first voluntary reporting of its environmental challenges and contributions. EarthPeople helped the firm evaluate its materials and waste stream, procurement policy and operations to identify opportunities for energy efficiency and resource conservation.

"I have been impressed by the firm's willingness to embrace sustainability initiatives," says **Anna Clark**, president of EarthPeople. "By choosing to participate in the Climate Challenge, the firm is demonstrating

industry leadership in a state that sorely needs leaders in the area of corporate environmental responsibility."

The Climate Challenge complements the firm's existing environmental initiatives, including sponsorship in the City of Dallas' First Graffiti Wipeout Coalition, Dallas' Trinity River cleanup and EarthFest. Gardere is also a supporter of the University of Houston's Center for Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Law.

In 2008, the firm will sponsor a climate change conference with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington D.C. The firm is also a sponsor of an upcoming conference of the Center for Global Sustainability and Ethics at the University of Dallas Graduate School of Management.

*Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP, an AmLaw 200 firm, was founded in 1909 and is one of the Southwest's largest full-service law firms. With offices in Austin, Dallas, Houston and Mexico City, Gardere provides legal services to private and public companies and individuals in areas of energy, litigation, corporate, tax, environmental, labor and employment, intellectual property and financial services.*

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