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Plant Power

New research indicates that the adequate installation of plants can deliver a solid return on investment.

Cincinnati, OH - based Plants at Work group believes the latest research clearly shows four bottom-line benefits of interior office plants:

- Plants can improve tenant occupancy and retention by 17 percent. Based on numerous case studies, including a scientific case study on the Opryland Hotel by Michael Evans, former associate professor of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA.
- Findings also indicate that an adequate plant installation in a modern, sealed office facility could save U.S. companies \$129 billion via contributions to improved indoor air quality (IAQ) alone. Researchers William J. Fisk and Arthur H. Rosenfeld, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, CA, found that companies could save \$58 billion annually by pre-

venting sick building syndrome and an additional \$200 billion in improved performance due to better IAQ. The same study verified that 40 percent of all sick days are IAQ-related.

- Recent studies have shown that interior plants enhance worker productivity by 12 percent. The research by Dr. Roger S. Ulrich of Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, Helen Russel, Surrey University, Surrey, England, and Dr. Virginia Lohr, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, showed that proper installation can significantly lower workplace stress, decrease fatigue, and improve productivity.
- Proper selection and placement of plants can lower heating and cooling costs by as much as 20 percent. According to the International Society of Arboriculture, Champaign, IL, the net cooling effect of one young, healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day. Plants reduce air temperature through evaporation and transpiration, states the Herndon, VA-based Associated Landscape Contractors of America.

Research-related information is available at:
www.plantsatwork.org.