

## Furniture Maker First New Mexico Manufacturer to Earn B Company Status

*By Finance New Mexico*

At Dapwood Furniture, artisans craft tables and bed frames using wood grown and harvested from American forests that are certified as sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council. An Albuquerque charity gets leftover wood to use in projects that benefit people in need, and some goes to people who rely on wood for winter heating.

The company hopes to convert its smaller byproducts — sawdust and shavings — into useful products, such as biochar — a type of charcoal used to improve soil and plant health.

Every aspect of the business, in fact, is seen through the prism of sustainability and social responsibility. The company that runs Dapwood’s website is powered by wind energy, and Dapwood owner Gregg Mich participates in his utility company’s sustainable energy program even as he studies the feasibility of converting the shop to solar power.

The depth and authenticity of Mich’s commitment to environmentally sound business practices was recognized last fall when the nonprofit certification organization B Lab certified Dapwood Furniture a B corporation — the first manufacturing business in New Mexico to earn this rank.

### To B or Not To B

B corporations are part of a larger movement — one that includes the fair trade and green building initiatives — to bring greater transparency and social responsibility to the corporate world and to minimize the impacts of human enterprises on Earth and its inhabitants.

Unlike companies that “greenwash,” or enact minimal Earth-friendly practices to create a façade of social responsibility, B corps undergo rigorous evaluation by B Lab to ensure they practice what they preach in every facet of the business. The “B” in B corporations stands for the benefits these companies pledge to generate for society and the planet.

Becoming a B corp wasn’t just a marketing ploy to Mich, whose sense of urgency about the planet’s welfare is palpable — and personal.

When his father developed Parkinson’s disease after a lifetime of working around pesticides and other toxic chemicals, it underscored Mich’s belief that humans need to adopt a longer-term perspective toward the world and our place in it.



“There are different ways we can be successful,” he said. “We can use business as a tool” to live harmoniously in the world.

He elaborates in a statement on the company’s website: “A business is a collection of people and not some sort of veil to hide behind. Corporate profits, shareholder equity, and executive bonuses are not the most important [objectives]. We believe happiness, good health, great communities and caring families are truly the most important.”

## Good Company

As a B corporation, Dapwood Furniture is legally required to consider the impact of business decisions on its employees, suppliers, community, consumers and environment. According to B Lab, more than a thousand companies in 33 countries have joined the B corporation ranks.

Mich would like to see that number grow so environmentally responsible ventures have a greater impact on the way business is conducted in New Mexico, the United States and beyond. To further that expansion, he is working with other entrepreneurs to form a B corporation coalition in New Mexico.

For more information about B corporations, visit <http://www.bcorporation.net>. To learn more about Dapwood Furniture, visit <http://dapwood.com>.

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