

# IG manufacturers encouraged to Plan Ahead

“This will be somewhat of a shock to manufacturers, because a majority do not currently certify IG.”

## >> NFRC to mandate third party testing within 18 months

A task group has been formed by the **NFRC** to investigate a mandatory requirement for third party certification of insulating glass units to be eligible for NFRC certification and ENERGY STAR labeling. This effort is in response to a recommendation from the US Department of Energy (DOE) to pursue IG Certification as one method to provide assurance that the IGU will last in the fenestration system. Several organizations including IGMA, IGCC, ALI and NAMI have programs in place for the certification of IG to ASTM E773/774 or E2190 (a.k.a., “HIGS” – Harmonized Insulating Glass Standard).

If approved by the NFRC Board, this new mandate is expected to be implemented within the next 18 months. “This will be somewhat of a shock to manufacturers, because a majority do not currently certify IG,” said Tracy Rogers, Edgetech technical director and NFRC task group member.

>> For those new to third party certification of IG, testing includes the following and can take 6-8 weeks to complete:

- Part I – Durability testing, which puts the IG through extreme low and high-temperature weather cycling and UV exposure.
- Part II – Canadian Volatile Fog Test, which is used to show that the components in an insulating glass unit

will not out-gas a volatile fog, which could result in a deposit on the interior glass surfaces.

Cost is a primary concern to the task group. “Testing can be very expensive and the NFRC Task Group is looking for ways to control both testing and certification costs,” Rogers said. “Right now there are a limited number of labs in North America that are equipped to conduct IG testing, and as the mandate goes into effect, there is a chance for overcrowding and extended lead times to complete certification.”

### Getting Started

The first step in having products HIGS certified is to contact one of four independent organizations: IGMA, IGCC, ALI and NAMI. Each organization will provide manufacturers with the proper procedures to get started.

According to the IGCC Web site ([www.igcc.org](http://www.igcc.org)), they will need manufacturers to first provide these three items:

1. Signed License Agreements
2. Passing test reports
3. Payment for appropriate certification fees

Once the facility is ready to provide test samples, an IGCC representative will visit to witness initial prototype sample fabrication. The glass and spacer may be cut prior to the arrival of the IGCC

representative, but all other portions of the fabrication must be witnessed. The test units will then be assigned a specific IGCC prototype number.

“It can take up to two weeks for IGCC and other certification companies to send a representative,” Rogers said. “So, that time should be built into the time line to receive certification.”

Requirements for test sample fabrication include:

- 12 units, 14 x 20 inches
- 3/16 or 1/4 inch glass
- 1/4 to 1/2 inch spacer

After fabrication of the prototypes, units would be delivered to an IGCC approved laboratory of the manufacturer’s choice. Upon completion of the testing, passing test results would then be provided to the IGCC by the lab, which would then provide the manufacturer permission to use the IGCC mark on the tested product or products.

Protocol similar to IGCC’s is followed by other certification organizations. The first step with IGMA is to fill out an application form, which is available online at [www.igmaonline.org/certification/IGMA](http://www.igmaonline.org/certification/IGMA).

### Planning Ahead

“We can’t stress enough the importance of planning ahead,” Rogers said. “Manufacturers using other spacer

systems may find that they have difficulty passing the stringent IG tests. They need to allow time for reengineering, if needed.”

And some reengineering may be necessary. Many spacer systems on the market will not pass current industry IG testing requirements, according to Rogers.

“If manufacturers are currently ENERGY STAR compliant or may wish to be in the future, this is yet another reason to turn to Edgetech,” Rogers said. “Windows using Super Spacer pass all current industry tests consistently.”

Edgetech’s expanded lab can also help customers ensure they will be able to continue using NFRC and ENERGY STAR labels – a necessity in order to stay competitive among increasing energy conscious consumers.

“Ultimately, making third party certification mandatory will elevate the credibility of ENERGY STAR on a global scale,” Rogers said. “Manufacturers will no longer be able to tout energy efficiency without understanding the effects of long term durability. This is a positive step in North America and the fenestration industry as a whole.”

For more information on NFRC certifications, visit [www.nfrc.org](http://www.nfrc.org). 

