

AWG Sheds 'Lite' on Grande Prairie Library Project

> > Triple-pane window systems add beauty and efficiency to LEED-bound project

All-West Glass (AWG) Northern Distribution Ltd. of Prince George, British Columbia, doesn't need to read up on energy efficiency – they are the experts. In 2007, the company bid on a project that would put its expertise to good use by supplying the Grande Prairie Library with sustainable, energy efficient window systems suitable for a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Gold certified structure.

"Since they needed the ultimate in energy efficiency and sustainability we quoted triple-pane IG with argon gas filling, Low-e and Super Spacer® TriSeal™," explained John McCartney, manager, sales and distribution, for AWG Northern Distribution. "This combination represents the best system to achieve the energy performance, long-term durability and condensation resistance necessary to earn points toward LEED. We were awarded the bid and began the work in August 2008."

The Grande Prairie Library in Alberta opened in June 2009, and boasts 37,400 square-feet of space housing state-of-the-art technology and a light-filled atmosphere. More than 10,000 square-feet of glass were specified for the project, which was led by Teeple Architects of Toronto, contractor Wright Construction of Saskatchewan and glazing contractor AWG. To meet the deadlines of the project, AWG enlisted PFG Glass of Langley,

British Columbia, to assist with IG production.

"We partnered with PFG because of their stellar reputation for quality and their ability to produce Super Spacer TriSeal units on an automated production line," McCartney said.

PFG manufactured around 300 IG units for the project. According to Ole Nielsen, founder and CEO of the company, some units were as large as 65 square-feet and 650 lbs.

"John McCartney visited our plant in April and thought immediately that the Grande Prairie Library project would be well suited for our automated TriSeal line," Nielsen said. "He was right. The line had no problem with the size requirements for making the triple units."

PFG's triple-pane units were constructed with: 6 mm Low-e glass, Super Spacer TriSeal, argon filling, 6 mm clear tempered glass, TriSeal, argon filling, and 6 mm Low-e with an overall thickness of 50 mm – or just shy of two inches.

Additionally, AWG built 12 specialty units featuring graphic printing on the center lites of the triple-pane systems.

"The graphic units were a challenge because they required a special housing design to accommodate a 3-1/8 inch edge deletion

and Cardinal LoE² lites for the structural offset units," McCartney said. "These systems also required special handling. For example, when the center-lite glass arrived from Germany, we learned we could not use an automatic washer. Each piece needed to be hand-cleaned using static-



free cloths." Some units also included a dot-matrix pattern to control sun glare, and all units included argon gas, Low-e and Super Spacer TriSeal.

"We use Super Spacer on every unit we manufacture that uses argon and Low-e," McCartney said. "We have worked with Edgetech for 15 years and are confident in its overall performance."

'Locally owned by northerners,' AWG was established in 1971 and has become one of the largest independent glass companies in Canada. The company employs 300 people and has 25 retail locations across northwest Canada. A branch of the full-service glass company, AWG Northern Distribution, produces 700 IG units per week at its 27,000 square-foot facility. "About 30 percent of our units are for residential use

and 70 percent commercial," McCartney said. "With a growing interest in LEED, we have seen an increasing number of jobs specified with Super Spacer products."

McCartney also noted he is seeing a greater number of specifications that call for triple-pane IG. "It all comes down to budget versus efficiency. Our capabilities enable us to provide a variety of solutions to best meet the needs of our customers. When customers are looking for optimal energy savings, we found that

Super Spacer TriSeal applies easily in both double- and triple-pane systems," he said.

When asked why AWG has worked with Edgetech for so long, McCartney said, "We adopted Super Spacer because it seemed like the best at the time. Throughout the years, the product has proven itself in terms of performance and manufacturing efficiencies, and Edgetech is very easy to work with."

The Grande Prairie Library hopes to earn LEED Gold certification and AWG has a number of upcoming projects with the same aspiration. "High-performance systems are in demand and we are happy to answer the call," McCartney concluded.

For more information, visit www.all-westglass.com or www.pfglass.com. 