

Smooth Transition Expected for Canadian ENERGY STAR® Updates

>> New standards for qualification to take effect Sept. 1, 2010



While change can often be intimidating, there is reason to believe the Canadian ENERGY STAR® updates to take effect Sept. 1, 2010, will go smoothly. Under the Canadian Standards Association CSA A440, IGMAC certification was already a requirement.

"I would estimate that around 85 percent of IG manufacturers in Canada have already obtained certification, so I don't anticipate the rush to the labs like in the U.S.," said Marg Webb, executive director for the Insulating Glass Manufacturers Alliance (IGMA). **"However, manufacturers need to be aware of the updates and how they impact their businesses."**

According to Webb, there are four points about ENERGY STAR® updates that every Canadian manufacturer should know:

1. IG Certification is now a requirement for ENERGY STAR® labeling in Canada
2. IGMA crosses both jurisdictions (U.S. and Canada)
3. If selling in Canada, or into Canada, gas content certification under CGSB 12.8 is a code requirement (currently, this is voluntary in the U.S.)
4. Recertification is not required for minor component changes

"So often manufacturers go into a state of panic over the cost of recertifying, even with slight changes to their units," Webb said. "They want to know if they need to recertify, and in many cases the answer is no. Generally the rule of thumb is that changes in components of the same material type are acceptable under the equivalency rules. However, as a rule, only major changes to the construction will require recertification."

Major changes would include:

- Corner construction alterations
- Changing the spacer system category (i.e. aluminum to steel)
- Changing the desiccant category
- Changing sealant categories or systems (i.e. changing from polysulfide to hot melt butyl or switching from single-seal to a dual-seal)

Webb encourages manufacturers to check with IGMA when in doubt, and refer to the alliance's equivalency charts, which outline interchangeable materials for IG construction.

"IGMA provides unbiased information, but manufacturers shouldn't discount the value suppliers can provide in meeting new, increasingly stringent IG performance standards," Webb said. "Suppliers should be

viewed as another member of the quality control team. The capital knowledge they bring to the team is extremely important. Edgetech I.G., in particular, is very good at supporting manufacturers through the certification process."

IGMA Leads Charge Toward New Gas Permeability Standard

With the help of the industry and sponsorships from the American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA) and the National Fenestration Ratings Council (NFRC), IGMA is entering into Phase 2 of its quest to develop a new standard for the determination of gas permeability.

"We have done much research in terms of gas fill and gas retention in IG units and it's a topic we feel requires further exploration," Webb said. "The objective of our current research is to develop a test method so that manufacturers will know at what rate gas will diffuse with their IG configurations."

During Phase 1, IGMA used more than 200 samples to test gas loss using the most

diffusion from the IG unit. According to Webb, this was the first time the industry has seen empirical data on this subject.

Phase 2, which began March 2009, consists of first developing the test methods and prototypes, and then testing variations of spacers and their commonly used sealants. The units will first be tested in static conditions with no stress applied. During Phase 3, the units will be subject to real-world stressors, such as pressure, temperature and UV light.

Phase 4 is when IGMA will write the test standard.

"The ultimate goal is to write and publish an IGMA standard with the possible intent to submit it for consideration by ASTM," Webb said. "By doing the research at IGMA, using IGMA funding, it speeds up the process. We believe developing a test standard for determination of gas permeability is a priority for manufacturers."

According to Webb, gas loss is a liability for manufacturers and the new test standard will help validate their claims with hard data. "They will know how to measure gas loss accurately with their configurations," Webb said.

IGMA anticipates completion of the research early 2010.

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common sealants at different temperatures and thicknesses. The tests resulted in a hierarchical list of sealants and their overall performance in terms of gas