



AWCI Celebrates 5th Anniversary of EIFS Program Excellence

Advancing the EIFS Industry – EIFS Doing It Right

September 2003

The Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries—International, Falls Church, Va., announces the 5th anniversary of its exterior insulation finish systems education and certificate (EIFS) program. More than 1,200 individuals have been certified during the first five years, and additional programs have been developed as the industry embraces its advances. At the five-year mark, there are live seminars leading to certification in three categories, video format instruction on generic EIFS applications and a corporate recognition registry just for EIFS contractors.

Originally developed to meet the need for generic education and certification for EIFS mechanics, the program has expanded well beyond that to meet the increasing demand from the industry to certify independent inspectors, as well as industry professionals such as general contractors, distributors, architects and engineers. Education is provided through attendance at a two-day instructor-led seminar or through a video and workbook format entitled “EIFS--Doing It Right,” with proctored, objective examinations administered to assess knowledge of program content. Separately, and reaching beyond the intended audience of EIFS contractors, a variety of organizations within and auxiliary to the EIFS industry have used AWCI’s programs in one manner or another.

Michael Heering of F.L. Crane & Sons, a large EIFS contractor with companies in four states, says the program is one of the company’s best tools on several counts: “We can see the difference in the work between those who have been through the program and not. There have been multiple occasions when the applicators have corrected themselves or other applicators. This tool affects our company’s quality and bottom line.” He goes on to say, “On a broader level, it’s a tool the industry in general can use as a policing device. There are lots of qualified mechanics; however, there are others who are doing work that gives EIFS a bad rap. This is a way of identifying those who are trained and tested; we need a smarter work force to keep EIFS viable.”

Nancy Roylance, who directs the program for AWCI, supports his assertion: “We’re hearing more and more that applicators can’t get on the job without ‘the card,’ our wallet certificates. EIFS contractors are getting

their applicators educated through the video program, and are going themselves to the seminars. The program has really taken off--what started as voluntary is becoming essential in just five short years.”

The level of industry “buy-in” is also evidenced by the 200 percent increase in the past year of “by request” seminars and also the other option of group testing. These options have been used by unions, distributors, contractors and professional associations. Many entities are coming forward to request EIFS education and certification at their location for large groups of customers, members or employees.

Also celebrating an anniversary is the EIFS*Smart* Contractor recognition launched one year ago. This distinction is awarded to companies that meet requirements regarding percentage of certified employees. More than 50 companies have achieved the distinction thus far, with still more in the process.

Roylance is not surprised by the immediate interest in this recognition program: “Contractors want that competitive edge and, lately, the negotiating power with insurance companies. Architects have already started specifying EIFS*Smart* contractors, and we expect that to build as awareness of this recognition spreads within and beyond the EIFS industry. EIFS*Smart* is an objective indicator of a company’s commitment to quality EIFS installation, education and certification, and the wider construction industry and consumers value that knowledge.”

Since 1918, AWCi has been serving wall and ceiling contractors, manufacturers, suppliers/distributors and others allied to the fields of acoustics, drywall, EIFS, fireproofing, insulation, plaster, steel framing, stucco and many other interior and exterior applications. The EIFS education and certificate program was developed in 1998 and has educated more than 1500 individuals according to industry standards since then.

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