Quality Program Launched
By Don Proctor

The EIFS Council of Canada’s proposed national quality assurance program I’ve talked about in past columns has taken a few big steps closer to reality. The plan was “soft launched” recently at a couple of regional wall and ceiling conferences where it was hardly endorsed by manufacturers through to contractors.

John Smith, national sales manager of Dryvit Systems Canada, a key member of the EIFS Council committee developing the program, was one of the presenters at the two conferences held on consecutive weeks in the scenic settings of seaside Victoria, B.C., and picturesque Banff, Alberta. Representatives from the B.C. and Alberta wall and ceiling associations, Construction Specifications Canada and the northwest U.S.-based Construction Specifications Institute attended.

The fact it was well-received by the industry in Canada’s two largest Western provinces is a positive step toward the program taking on a national identity. It seems to have the support of the industry in Ontario, Canada’s biggest province. Smith says the QAP is complete to the point that the committee is soliciting registrations.

Dryvit is expected to be one of its first registrants. At the same time, training sessions for mechanics (EIFS applicators) have commenced in different regions. The idea is to set a standard for application procedures that starts with strict compliance with the manufacturers’ guidelines right through to adherence to documentation specified by the owner. Once a contractor’s core of applicators have completed the course, the company will receive a QAP certification.

Certified contractors will be required to post a $150,000 (Cdn.) bond. Contractors who fail to meet contract specifications will be required to repair the faulty work or forfeit their bond, in which case the program’s administration will assign another contractor to complete the work.

The cost of the program has been calculated at 2 percent of the price of a contract. That price will be incorporated into the final bid price submitted by certified contracting firms.

Architects that the program’s committee has met with see the program as a smart move, says Smith, adding it’s the first national QAP to his knowledge in North America. It won’t be difficult convincing most reputable contractors of the voluntary program’s merits; it is the fly-by-night companies known for sub-par work for which the program will have little appeal. Smith says he expects it will take three to five years to get most everyone in the industry on board in the program.

On another front, the Ontario Association of Architects has gone ahead with its plan to exclude face-seal wall-systems from coverage in its indemnity plan. Smith says major EIFS manufacturers such as Dryvit see it as a positive step: “We haven’t been defending barrier EIFS for some time. We’re saying, ‘Let’s evolve as an industry.’”

Alternative systems (such as moisture drainage barrier ones) have played a big part of the manufacturing sector’s production line for some years now, so eliminating coverage of face seal systems won’t have a major impact on many companies. “Really, since Wilmington, major companies including Dryvit have all developed alternatives,” Smith explains.

While reputable contractors can make a good case for why face seal systems work well when properly installed, the problem is that not every contractor has met performance criteria. And that has given the industry a black eye. Kevin Day, president of the EIFS Council, sees the move by the OAA as part of the maturation of the industry. The OAA’s exclusion went into effect July 1.

About the Author
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