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News to know

Glaziers overcome labor shortage through training, technology

Code council committee strikes bath enclosure amendments, approves new energy code

Safti First exec responds to cost concerns

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Construction put in place edges up in August

The week's business headlines

e-glass poll

Which of the following is the most successful way to find workers? (choose one)

- Local print advertising
- Internet job boards
- Hold open houses
- Use recruiters
- Hire from the competition

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News to know

Safti First exec responds to cost concerns

Q&A with William O'Keeffe

In a series of e-glass weekly articles on wired glass in schools, architects said budget issues become an issue for school districts wanting to make the switch from wired glass to fire- and impact-resistant alternatives.

William O'Keeffe, president and chief executive officer of fire-rated glass manufacturer Safti First out of San Francisco, responded to those budget concerns in an interview, adding that changes to the building codes that require hose-stream tests could help bring costs down.

To read an in-depth article about the debate over requiring hose-stream tests for fire-rated products, click [here](#).

What is your response to perceptions among architects and school officials that alternative fire- and impact-resistant products are not economically feasible for many districts?

When comparing traditional wired glass to safety-rated wired glass such as [SuperLite I-W](#), the perception is incorrect because the cost difference is not that great. However, more and more, architects are being pushed to use clear products, and that is where it becomes expensive. This is because the codes in this country are not allowing the use of tempered products without requiring the approval of the authority having jurisdiction, or AHJ, making it difficult for alternates of ceramics.

Are prices falling for impact-resistant fire-glass products?

Prices are not falling for clear, ceramic products. There are only three manufacturers of ceramics in the world, and unless the hose stream test is removed for 45-minute fire protective applications, there is no competitive pressure to reduce prices. Because the hose-stream requirement for 45-minute applications only exists in the United States and Canada, ceramics do not have a market outside of the United States and Canada. The rest of the world has been able to use less expensive, clear, tempered, safety-rated, and radiant-heat-reducing products for more than 30 years.

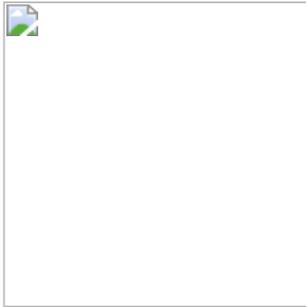
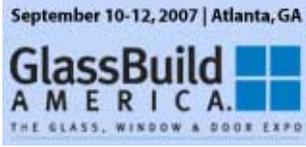
Will the prices for these products ever reach a level comparable to wired glass?

I believe that fire-protective products can reach the level compared to wired glass—maybe even less—if the hose stream test is removed for 45-minute fire protective applications. This change will allow for clear, safety rated, tempered products that are already being used in most other parts of the world.

What code changes would be needed to reduce these costs?



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The AHJ can help by reviewing the history and intention of hose-stream test requirements for 45-minute doors and sidelites more critically. AHJs can waive the hose stream requirement for 45-minute doors and sidelites, allowing for less expensive, clear, safety-rated tempered products to be used without sacrificing safety in any way. ... [Safti First] is trying to make headway during the upcoming hearings to remove the hose stream test for 45-minute applications and therefore provide for the use of less expensive better performing products.

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