

Fire-Rated Code Proposal

One View on the Activities of the ICC's CTC

by Jeff Griffiths

In the fall of 2008, GANA's Fire-Rated Glazing Council (FRGC) established a task group to delve into the various issues arising from the implementation of the existing fire-rated glazing labeling system (see August 2008 *USGlass*, page 32, for more). The committee's conclusions focused on three basic issues: conflicting system interpretations, third-party listings versus actual code compliance and the system's practical purpose.

At the same time as the FRGC's task group activity, the International Code Council's (ICC) Code Technical Committee (CTC) Labeling Study Group began meeting in an effort to settle the debate over the marking standards through ICC code change proposals. The CTC acknowledged that this issue had been debated by the industry and within the standards writing organizations without resolution. Therefore, the CTC Study Group defined its objective as to identify root causes of problems encountered in the selection, specification, installation and inspection of fire-protective and fire-resistive glazing and other assembly components, including the frames. The CTC group decided to explore specific label designations with respect to code-compliant applications identified within the 2009 International Building Code.

THE END RESULT

The end result is a series of proposed code changes that, according to the study group, are intended "to make the marking provisions of Chapter 7 easier to understand and enforce, and to minimize the possibility that the system could result in confusion between fire protection-rated products in applications where fire resistance-rated products

ICC CTC Table 715.3 - Marking Fire-Rated Glazing Assemblies		
Fire Test Standard	Marking	Definition of Marking
ASTM E119 or UL 263	W	Meets wall assembly criteria.
NFPA 257 or UL 9	OH	Meets fire window assembly criteria including the hose stream test.
NFPA 252 or UL 10B or UL 10C	D	Meets fire door assembly criteria.
	H	Meets fire door assembly "hose stream" test.
	T	Meets 450° F temperature rise criteria for 30 minutes.
	XXX	The time in minutes of the fire resistance or fire protection rating of the glazing assembly.

SOURCE: GANA Labeling Task Group

meeting ASTM E 119 are permitted."

As a result of suggestions I and some other members of the GANA Labeling Task Group made, a new Table 715.3 has been proposed. The table defines and relates the various test standards for fire-rated glass to the designations used to mark fire-rated glazing. A new definition of the term "fire-rated glazing" also is included. The study group chose to delete all text used to define and relate test standards to marking designations in favor of including all of the required marking provisions in Tables 715.3, 715.4 and 715.5. This is intended to provide building and fire code officials with easy access to all of the information needed when inspecting fire door and window installations, including required marking designations.

If adopted, these changes will provide glaziers, architects, specifiers and building officials with a single

definitive source for confirming the correct glazing for particular applications.

Undoubtedly, there will always be those that believe that understanding the code requirements for fire-rated products is unnecessarily complicated. However imperfect the codes may be, I believe the new IBC 2009 Chapter 7 tables will serve the public by marrying marking designations with code-compliant applications. Whether or not these changes are readily adopted by your local code authority, I feel you will be well served by keeping copies of the new tables ready for quick reference. ■

the author



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