

AMD Answers Hard Questions

Pre-Hangers Look for Reasons for Exterior Door Standard

Rosalie Leone, executive director of the Association of Millwork Distributors, recently answered some specific questions concerning the side-hinged exterior door standard, also known as AAMA/WDMA/CSA 101/IS2/A440. (You can also read a pre-hanger's perspective by Peter McIlwee of McIlwee Millwork in the AMD Headlines column in the November/December 2007 issue of **SHELTER** magazine on page 50)

To give you a little background, in its current form the standard would call for door pre-hangers to test, certify and label all exterior door systems for compliance with the standard as a complete unit. The standard covers performance criteria

in the areas of: structural, cycle count, air and water infiltration and forced entry. As the proposed standard is written currently, no interchanging of components is allowed. All possible combinations of door units would need to be individually tested and certified to be labeled. The standard has the support of the Window and Door Manufacturers Association, American Architectural Manufacturers Association and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and is moving through the final actions in each of the three associations.

Here are some of the questions **SHELTER** asked Leone and her responses:

SHELTER: *What effect will this standard have on pre-hangers?*

Leone: A440 is moving through the final actions of the AAMA/WDMA/CSA consensus process. WDMA has already filed an International Code Council building code amendment removing the exemption for door systems, which affects both residential and commercial construction. The code hearings are scheduled for late February. If the process moves forward without consideration for component changing pre-hangers, there may be negative supply market impacts and price increases for consumers in areas where the codes are strictly enforced and demand remains consistent. WDMA noted in its amendment text that the price of construction would increase due to added testing.

SHELTER: *Has AMD done any pre-testing of interchangeable parts with door units?*

Leone: AMD has partnered with AAMA's Door Council to test structural component interchange. We are currently in the third round of testing; more time is required to complete the testing and report the results.



by Samantha
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magazine.



Curt Henderson works on assembling an exterior door unit at Lewis Millwork in Benton, Ark.



At Millwork Specialties Inc. in Whiteville, N.C., its door shop consists of two single-door tables and one double and triple table. The company can produce doors up to 110 inches wide and 97 inches tall to meet the design pressure the company has tested for.



John Bramlett (left) has been the manager of the door shop at Lewis Millwork in Benton, Ark. for ten years. Carl Striegel (right) is working on exterior door units, while Bramlett helps.

SHELTER: *Have there been steps taken to ensure quality installation as well?*

Leone: This is a great question! With all the work to push this document to code adoption without proper testing, there has been little talk of two important factors that equally guarantee effective product performance in the field; namely, installation and code enforcement. AMD supports the codes. It's just that there may be more efficient uses of our limited resources as an industry than code amendments; we may find better "bang for our bucks" in door performance elsewhere.

SHELTER: *Has AMD thought about handling certification if this standard goes through?*

Leone: AMD does not certify products. AMD leadership would need to identify certification as an association need; at that point we would do some cost/benefit to find if the service was economically feasible. If the exemption were removed by the WDMA amendment, this would likely lead to more testing and certification, and this could lead AMD into that marketplace.

SHELTER: *How much does this/will this cost?*

Leone: This standard addresses existing tests and tests that have never been performed before on the pre-hangers. Pre-hangers currently are exempt from these new processes and have no cost histories. We are currently researching answers to questions just like this for our membership.

SHELTER: *Why is there a sudden push to get this standard approved in the international codes?*

Leone: It was communicated from WDMA staff in a recent teleconference

that the code officials are requesting this standard to move forward. AMD does not oppose door testing; we just want the test procedures to reflect the current image of our market suppliers and to be based on tested data.

SHELTER: *Is AMD looking at hiring a person that deals with codes and standards (since Sarah Rice, former code consultant, recently left AMD)?*

Leone: AMD has hired an experienced national code professional as AMD's director of industry standards and codes, Jeff Burton, a former code manager for the insurance industry's Institute for Business & Home Safety. Jeff has experience with the International Code Council, the National Fire Protection Association, state code councils, local building departments and numerous building-related associations.

SHELTER: *What would you like to see AMD members do if they want to be proactive about this standard?*

Leone: AMD wants quality tested products as much as anyone and AMD members build quality products. Our message is to support product certification that is healthy for both the market as a whole as well as the consuming public.

For an extensive article highlighting the side-hinged exterior door standard, read the January/February 2008 issue of **SHELTER** magazine. 

To View the Standard

The AAMA/WDMA/CSA 101/1.S.2/A440-05 Standard can be purchased and down-loaded from the WDMA's website at www.wdma.com.