

## AAMA Task Group May Double Length of Test Requirements



Members of the American Architectural Manufacturers Association heard pros and cons of extending the life of air-water structural test reports from four to eight years during the association's summer meeting.

The American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA) has formed a task group to develop a process and procedure for a new test report format for air-water structural test that would require reports every eight years, rather than every four years as currently required.

If approved, this proposal would extend the life of these reports from the current

requirement of four years to as long as eight years for products that have had no changes. The change was first submitted to the Certification Policy Committee (CPC) during the association's annual conference in February and included a stipulation that all plant inspections must be successful for the extension to remain in effect. At the February meeting, the CPC voted in favor of this proposal but the

### OSHA Announces Rulemaking on Combustible Dust Hazards

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has initiated a comprehensive rulemaking on combustible dust.

OSHA will issue an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and convene related stakeholder meetings to evaluate possible regulatory methods and request data and comments on issues related to combustible dust such as hazard recognition, assessment, communication, defining combustible dust and other concerns.

Combustible dusts are solids finely ground into fine particles, fibers, chips, chunks or flakes that can cause a fire or explosion when suspended in air under certain conditions. Types of dusts include metal (aluminum and magnesium), wood and plastic, among others.

"Over the years, combustible dust explosions have caused many deaths and devastating injuries that could have been prevented," says Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. "OSHA is reinvigorating the regulatory process to ensure workers receive the protection they need while also ensuring that employers have the tools needed to make their workplaces safer."

► [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

AAMA board of directors decided to delay the implementation until an open forum could be held at the summer meeting where members could voice their opinions, and that they did. During AAMA's summer meeting in June the CPC held an open forum to hear member opinions on this potential change. Opinions on the change varied widely.

Rich Biscoe from Architectural Testing Inc. (ATI) said that more than 50 percent of failure rates come from products that are retested that the manufacturer had reported had no changes. For example, he said a hardware company could have made a change without the manufacturer's knowledge, which could account for the failure.

"We will have more bad products out there if we make this change," he said. "People say that I'm from a test lab so of course I'll say this, but as an engineer this bothers me."

Ray Garries of Jeld-Wen added that manufacturers need to ensure that their protocols are correct in the plant and that more testing isn't the best solution. He also pointed out that manufacturers put their products through other test methods as well.

"AAMA is not the only show in town," he said. "For example, Dade County [Fla.] is the most stringent program out there and they test every ten years. This will not have a big impact," Garries said.

Henry Taylor from ATI disagreed. "AAMA has dumbed down the program before and doesn't need to do so again," he said.

The task group will present its proposal at the CPC meeting during the AAMA fall conference in September. If approved at that time, this change could go into effect as early as October 1, 2009.

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