

December 2004: KAW Expands Scope and Reach

Quite a bit of activity has transpired since the last KAW update within the May/June edition of the AEC Executive Report. In that report we indicated that in May during the Final Code Hearings of the International Code Council (ICC) two particular proposed code changes to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), which were of interest and significance to the aluminum fenestration industry because of the effect that they would have in both the commercial and residential markets, EC31 and EC48 respectively had been passed. It should also be noted that that the changes in question affect the prescriptive path of code compliance. Unlike Energy Star there is a performance path available in considering the building as a whole, but there are other obvious complexity and cost considerations that come into play. EC48 was concerned with issues relative to residential, in the matter of the lessening of the climate zones. EC31, on the other hand could have significant impact as it dealt with non-residential applications.

On August 20th AEC submitted a code revision proposal to the IECC on its own and also again joined with the American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA) as a co-proponent on another code revision proposal, both of which pertain to the 2005-2006 code cycle. Briefly, the code revision put forth with AAMA, relative to Table 802.2(2), eliminates the distinction between "factory assembled" and "site built" fenestration products, adjusts the U-factor for commercial glazed systems to a reasonable level that manufacturers of commercial glazed systems can meet while still providing systems that have the strength and durability needed in commercial buildings and revises the SHGC requirement for residential type windows to be consistent with the requirements for residential windows in Chapter 4 of the IECC and Chapter 11 of the IRC. The code proposal AEC put forth individually pertained to Section 402.5.1 and offered a substitute U-value limit within that section which was more easily attainable with aluminum products. KAW/AEC representatives will again be participating at the ICC Code Hearings this coming February. You may view the actual proposed IECC code revisions at the AEC website, under the KAW section.

Relative to the Energy Star Program on October 8th posted a call for comments relative to the "Analysis Results for Performance-Based Ratings for the ENERGY STAR Windows Program" report issued by Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory (LBNL). The deadline for comments was November 15, 2004. The LBNL report recommended a partial implementation of a performance based tradeoff system for Energy Star. AEC, as well as other KAW stakeholders submitted supporting comments. It is our position that by supporting DOE on their proposal of a partial implementation it might be an opportunity for AEC to obtain the precedent for performance-based standards as window rating systems for other geographical regions and building codes evolve. AEC will work with DOE on the issue of how to address the performance-based approach in the State of California and in the North Central region. The AEC comments in their entirety may be found within the KAW section of the AEC website. Those wishing to also see comments made by other KAW stakeholders as well as other industry representatives may follow this link to the DOE forum: http://www.govforums.org/e&w/view_thread.cfm?post_id=207.

As a final note, in late summer the Building & Construction Subcommittee formed a subgroup, the Technical Task Group, to serve the much needed role of evaluating, on a technical basis, the various code proposals and positions being taken by AEC to assure that we are representing the best interests of aluminum products in the various actions being undertaken via KAW. Participation within the group is open to any KAW stakeholder with appropriate technical expertise.