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CLARKWESTERN ADVANCES STEEL FRAMING COMPLIANCE EFFORTS

Open Letter to Drywall Framing Distributors and Contractors:

Recently, the membership of the Steel Stud Manufacturers Association voted unanimously to instruct its Board of Directors and Technical Committee to develop a third-party inspection program as part of an industry-wide code compliant initiative.

ClarkWestern embraces this initiative and is currently delivering a program entitled: "Proper Specification and Installation Recommendations for Nonstructural Wall Framing" to contractors, distributors, architects and code officials. As an advocate and participant in third party testing, ClarkWestern is delivering these education sessions to provide the necessary tools for understanding the information that currently resides in various published standards. A companion presentation for Structural Framing is currently in development and will be available shortly.

Simply put, "code compliant" nonstructural steel framing is manufactured in accordance with strict specifications that are clearly defined by **ASTM C645**. These specifications list:

- Minimum Coating weight
- Minimum Uncoated steel thickness
- Dimensional requirements
- Provisions for proper labeling

In addition, the **ICC-ESR** Evaluation Service Reports issued to individual steel framing manufacturers requires strict adherence to these specifications, plus third party testing. Third party testing is the pinnacle in quality assurance because a compliant manufacturer opens their doors to inspection to an outside party.

Code Compliance Implications for Framing Contractors: Contractors cannot afford to put the safety of a project or their reputation at risk because they did not supply framing members meeting the requirements of code and fire specifications clearly published in the Architectural Specifications.

Code Compliance Implications for Distributors: You must ensure that your steel framing vendors are supplying you with compliant product or risk devaluation of your inventory if product is declared non-compliant.

Code Compliance Implications for Manufacturers: It is incumbent upon us, as manufacturers, not only to provide products that meet or exceed the above requirements for all jobs, but also to educate the construction community.

As mentioned, ClarkWestern Building Systems has begun an extensive educational program to provide this information to Architects and Code Officials, contractors, and our distributor partners. If you would like to schedule a presentation for your company we would welcome the opportunity to provide an educational session at a mutually agreeable time and place.

ClarkWestern Building Systems
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