NACC
North American Contractor Certification

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NACC CERTIFICATION

An overview of the program, process, and benefits to certified contractors.

NACC Certification provides a "baseline for competency, business practices, and adherence to industry-accepted guidelines for glazing contractors."

NACC Program

The North American Contractor Certification (NACC) Program recognizes contractors who demonstrate consistency, quality, and safety excellence. But the credential is much more than an arbitrary award; it is a third-party endorsement of companies having completed a significant and time-intensive process establishing a "baseline for competency, business practices, and adherence to industry-accepted guidelines for glazing contractors."

The NACC program was developed with input from architects, engineers, contractors, consultants, specifications and documentation specialists, and product manufacturers, and it has achieved ANSI accreditation in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065.

Since launching in July 2015, NACC has gained industry acceptance and recognition for raising the bar of quality and professionalism.

According to Dave Stutzman, president of independent consulting firm, Conspectus, Inc., "As a specifier, installer certification is important to me because it offers independent verification of minimum, industry-accepted qualifications necessary to complete a specific type of work. Certification replaces all the subjective criteria normally specified to ensure qualified installers are bidding."

Well-rounded Certification

The NACC credential is based on proficiency in five components: business practices, safety, glazing processes, contract administration, and quality. By assessing all aspects of a glazing contractor's business, the well-rounded certification process benchmarks the means and methods that drive high performance and high quality in the industry.

Certification allows your organization to demonstrate that you have taken the right steps to deliver the best possible end product and you can provide this assurance to your clients with demonstrated evidence through a fully-qualified professional third party.

Administration

Administrative Management Systems, Inc. (AMS, Inc.) is the third-party administrator of the NACC program, serving as the point of contact for certification, inspection, and auditing. The organization also provides certification administration for the Safety Glazing Certification Council (SGCC), Insulating Glass Certification Council (IGCC), and other related industry groups.

Only certified companies may use the NACC Certified logo, with their license number printed below.

Five Components of NACC Certification

BUSINESS PRACTICES	SAFETY	GLAZING PROCESSES	CONTRACTS	QUALITY
1	2	3	4	5

AMS, Inc. Quality Manager Terry Schaefer emphasizes the quality controls associated with NACC. "It's not just a checklist for a contractor to follow," he says. "We want to document that contractors do what they say and say what they do." This extends from following protocols outlined in a safety manual to adhering to best practices described in a quality manual.

Quality Management

The Quality Management Systems requirement of NACC certification is a multi-faceted control that benefits contractors while ensuring quality of business practices and craftsmanship for their clients. The quality requirement alone entails having the following eight items in place: a quality manual, annual internal audit, operational procedures, equipment maintenance and accuracy reporting, record retention policy, document control, corrective action and preventive action for nonconformities affecting quality, and procedures for handling customer feedback. The NACC Program Procedural Guide describes the entire certification process with helpful tools and samples.

Schaefer believes that the proceduralization involved with certification simplifies the process for contractors. "Getting good procedures in place is 80 percent of it," he explains. "Then it's just a matter of following and maintaining those policies." And that leads not only to certification but also to more efficient and better-operated businesses.

Critical Mass

"The amazing thing we've seen is the broad appeal," explains NACC Program Manager Jeff Dalaba. "From architects and consultants to insurance companies, all agree that certification is something that's needed because it makes the industry stronger."

As architects and consultants begin to demand certification, the industry will see shifts toward a critical mass of certified contractors. In just three years since NACC began, 18 glazing contractors have achieved certification nationwide. That number continues to grow.

Wealth of Benefits

NACC certification demands a significant commitment. The comprehensive program can take several weeks or months to complete, depending on the company. But national industry recognition is only one reward; cost savings add up to another sizable benefit.

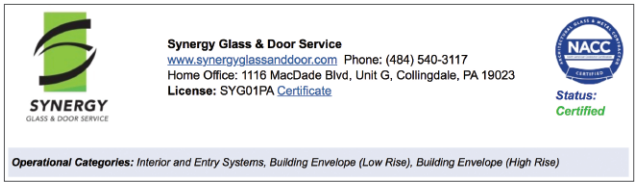
Associate Principal of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., Dale Fuhr, CDT, sits on the NACC certification board as a representative of the user community. His company includes engineers, architects, and materials scientists. Fuhr has the added perspective of having begun his career as a union glazier who worked his way up to owner of a glass company before taking on his current consulting role. Fuhr believes the self-examination aspect of NACC offers numerous benefits that lead to financial savings.

"Certification points out weaknesses most of us fail to realize we have," he explains. "The process helps companies better understand where money might be walking out the door."

Pat McIntyre of Synergy Glass and Door Service in Collingdale, Pa., echoes Fuhr's sentiment about the value of the NACC assessment. "Achieving the NACC certification is a huge step in the growth of our company. Throughout this process, we learned ways to better improve our day-to-day systems. We saw areas in both office and field procedures that needed attention and we made those changes."

As assessors review companies, they see good and bad examples of business practices and safety protocol, and they can help companies understand how to improve. Self-evaluation lets companies correct deficiencies before moving on toward certification, meaning the rewards of the process appear before certification is attained.

Sample NACC website listing for a certified contractor:



Fuhr points out that insurance companies are beginning to offer premium discounts for certification. "In some cases, your insurance premium savings may exceed the cost of the program, giving you an immediate return on investment," he says. He sees bonding as another area where certification may lead to favorable ratings.

Writing 'On' the Specs

The writing may not be on the wall – or in the specs everywhere – just yet, but certification will soon be more a mandate than a voluntary differentiator. As NACC expands, the credential will begin to be written into specs. Fuhr says that firms like WJE will begin to incorporate language related to the use of NACC certified contractors into its specifications in regions where a minimum of three certified contractors (or those with evidence of a company-wide quality assurance program) exist. Emphasis on quality and avoiding litigation are two motivating factors; the commitment to quality espoused by NACC adds a level of confidence that may soon become industry norm.

Only the Beginning

Another shift will soon appear in the form of certified craftworkers. In 2017, development of the Architectural Glass and Metal Technician (AGMT) Certification Program was started by Administrative Management Systems, Inc., the same organization that administers the NACC program. The AGMT Certification Program is guided by a 27-member steering committee comprised of glaziers, glazing contractors, manufacturers, suppliers, architects, consultants, and specifications writers. According to Ben Beeler, the program's co-designer, "The program is being designed to test those attributes that will most likely minimize defects and failures – an initiative that stands to benefit all stakeholders."

A natural complement to NACC certification, AGMT certification will distinguish skilled glass and metal technicians from their industry peers, adding another tier of quality and craftsmanship to certified contractor firms.

Quality Management System Requirements

Table 7A from the NACC Program Procedural Guide

Category	Requirement
Company policies	Contractor shall have evidence of communication of company policies to personnel through handbook, employee manual, meetings with sign in, or other appropriate means.
Quality Management Systems (QMS) in place and used throughout organization. (See Appendix C for additional explanation of terms)	Contractor shall have a QMS program that includes the following items: 1. A **Quality Manual** that outlines your Quality Management System. The manual should be approved by management and available to all personnel. 2. Annual **Internal Review** of processes and procedures in Quality Management System with results recorded (internal audit). 3. **Operational Procedures** and/or work instructions established and in use. 4. Equipment **Maintenance and Accuracy** - Measuring equipment should be uniquely identified, checked on a determined periodic frequency, and documents. 5. **Record Retention Policy** to establish how long records (including completed jobs) are retained. 6. **Document Control** procedure defining how documents are approved for use and how they are revised. Changes and current version of documents shall be identified. 7. **Corrective Action and Preventative Action (CAPA)** procedure for identifying and correcting non-conformities or potential non-conformities affecting quality. 8. Procedure for handling **Customer Feedback** including warranty claims or service requests for completed jobs.
Organization Chart	Contractor shall have an organizational chart, showing key areas of responsibility and authority within the contractor's organization.
Personnel Files / Employee Records	Contractor shall retain records on each employee including any contract labor help. Files shall include: 1. Resume or application showing applicable experience. 2. Training and assessment records.
Key qualified person responsible for Quality Management Systems	The contractor shall designate a key person responsible for Quality Management Systems. The designated person shall have a working knowledge of the contractor's QMS. The designated person may serve other duties for the contractor in addition to being responsible for the QMS.

Refer to the NACC Program Procedural Guide for more details.

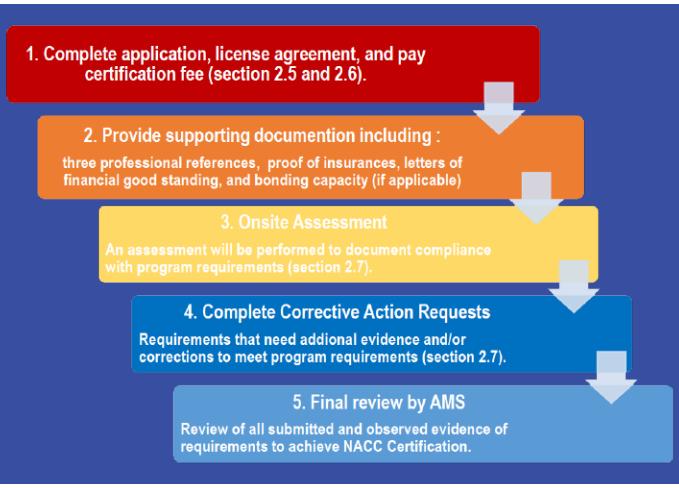
It is a widely held understanding that firms with qualified component staff and verified systems for quality and safety will provide the best possible outcomes for glazing projects. Combining NACC and AGMT will help industry stakeholders clearly identify the most responsible bidder for their project.

The NACC Program provides certification of the AG&M contractor's company business practices, safety, quality, contract administrative processes, and glazing processes. The program includes the fabrication and installation of AG&M products as evaluated through the program requirements and detailed in the Program Procedural Guide. AG&M contractors must meet the requirements of the program to be listed as a certified contractor. The term of certification is one year and can be renewed by the Architectural Glass & Metal Contractor Licensee annually, subject to an annual assessment and meeting program requirements.

NACC Steps to Become Certified

The following steps must be completed before AMS can list an Architectural Glass & Metal Contractor as certified in the NACC Program.

Refer to the NACC Program Procedural Guide for additional information and details or contact:
Jeff Dalaba I AMS, Inc.
jeff@amscert.com or (315) 646-2234



RESOURCES

Read more about certification:

Learn more about the AGMT and NACC certification programs or begin the certification process online at: https://www.GlazingCertification.com

Follow NACC on twitter: https://twitter.com/NACCPRogram

Certified Company Listing:
https://GlazingGertification.com/nacc/nacc-directory/

Read industry coverage about certification:

"NACC Aims for Easier Understanding of Glazier Certification." US Glass Magazine. February 2016:
http://www.usglassmag.com/2016/02/nacc-aims-for-easier-understanding-of-glazier-certification/

"Administrative Management Systems Hosts Glazier Certification Summit." Glass Magazine. February 24, 2017:
https://glassmagazine.com/news-item/commercial/administrative-management-systems-hosts-glazier-certification-summit-1716179

"Stage Set for Development of AGMT Certification Program." AGMA. Spring 2017:
http://www.agma.glass/stage-set-development-agmt-certification-program