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Cast Stone Institute® Education Opportunities

by Jan Boyer, Executive Director of the Cast Stone Institute®

The Cast Stone Institute® recognizes that, because cast stone is not included many times in the training of specifiers or masons, there is confusion as to the properties of the product as well as the appropriate construction practices. True to its mission to improve the quality of cast stone and disseminate information regarding its use, the Institute provides information about technical aspects of the product and has produced seminars to train on the properties and best practices for placing cast stone to ensure long durable life on the building. Institute technical specification, bulletins, details and related material are included individually and in the Cast Stone Institute Technical Manual available for free download from the website www.caststone.org.

The following seminars are available through the Institute to train mason contractors and architects on best practices:

Architectural Design with Cast Stone

In this general information seminar, you will learn how Cast Stone is made, how it differs from related precast and natural stone materials and the testing requirements for cast stone as per ASTM that include a freeze thaw requirement. The applications, design recommendations and appropriate specification of Cast Stone for architectural applications will be discussed. Do's and don'ts for appropriate design and placement of the stone is reviewed. The sustainable attributes of Cast Stone related to LEED and green building will also be discussed.

Cast Stone Connections

In this detailed seminar, the common terminology, design and installation techniques for interior and exterior architectural applications and anchoring for veneer applications of Cast Stone will be taught. Attendees will understand the common exterior veneer installation methods as well as guidelines for stacked or relief supported cast stone veneer, rebated anchors, mechanical cladding systems, appropriate wall ties, back anchors, kerfs, shims, mortar joints, sealant joints and caulking options.

Additionally, industry codes and regulations as they relate to proper cast stone details and setting will be reviewed.

Jobsite Handling & Installation

This seminar is geared specifically toward mason contractors and field supervisors to address field practices for the proper handling of architectural cast stone. It addresses shop drawings, sample approvals, shipment and on site storage, tolerances, cold weather setting practices, flashing, weep holes, sealant joints, protection after setting and touch up.

These seminars are available for presentation to local, regional or national mason groups. Contact the Cast Stone Institute office to arrange for a CSI Certified Producer Member to make the presentation.

All Certified CSI Producer Members must pass a rigorous certification that checks for outstanding quality control, safety procedures, consistency of product, meticulous record keeping and many other manufacturing processes which are involved in the production of high quality cast stone elements. In addition, members must provide testing of product every 500 cubic ft. for compression and absorption as well as independent laboratory test results every six months to confirm their product meets the Institute standard specification and ASTM C1364. They must also have a current compliant Freeze Thaw test. This required testing assures the Producer Member, the specifier and owner that they are indeed producing cast stone to specifications. Without this testing, there is no way to assure quality cast stone production.

Cast Stone Institute[®] Producer Members must also undergo the recertification process every two years by unannounced plant inspections performed by an independent engineering firm in order to assure compliance to requirements. The Institute certification differs from others in that they certify that not only the processes are in place to make quality product but that the product itself is meeting specifications. They each provide a 10 year Limited Product Warranty for the cast stone they supply on projects.

For more information about the Cast Stone Institute[®] log onto www.caststone.org or contact the office by calling 717-274-3744 or email to staff@caststone.org.