

THE INSIDER

A NATIONAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS AND GLOBAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS MONTHLY PUBLICATION

Issue # 10 - October 2009

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 1 FROM THE PRESIDENT
- 2 MARKETING INSIGHT
- 3, 4 HIGHLIGHTS

TECHNICAL BULLETINS

TOPIC: Finger-jointed Lumber

TOPIC: Tensioned Fabric Membrane

2009 Annual Meeting

The 2009 Annual Meeting is scheduled for Nov. 6 and Nov. 7.

Registration deadline is Oct. 12!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

National Property Inspections, Inc. has been a long-time associate member and supporter of ASHI. Now that ASHI has officially launched their "inspector school," they have become direct competitors of ours. Omaha will let its ASHI membership expire and will not renew it. However, Omaha's decision does not affect your individual memberships.

The general consensus is that we are pulling out of the recession. This one was unusually long (over two years) and painful. My best advice is to better prepare for the next one. One definition of "insanity" is "doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result." We all need to think long term and change to meet the challenges facing us.

This past year, more than any other, a lot of you asked us for guidance on how to grow and diversify your businesses. Thus, a lot of this year's annual meeting is devoted to that purpose. You will receive specific advice and guidance on how to grow and diversify your business. You will hear from franchisees who have already done so. We encourage you to be there. There is no way to capture the essence of this and e-mail it to you in a PowerPoint presentation.

I am pleased to say that we have been tentatively approved to become a Licensed Service Organization through Natural Resources Canada (NRCANADA). They still have to approve the resumes of our "Trainer" and "Quality Assurance" people. Once that is done, those two people must attend training and pass an exam in Ottawa in November. After successful completion of that, we can train and certify energy advisors and process their "evaluations." This will make performing energy evaluations much more profitable for the GPI franchisees. We are very excited about this because energy evaluations are very popular in Canada. We could not have done this without the help and assistance of the GPI franchisees. Thank you very much.

Energy audits/evaluations here in the U.S. are a moving target. No one can say with certainty when, where or how the market (as it pertains to us) will develop. We are watching, studying and researching the U.S. market continually. We are trying to position ourselves to move quickly once the market has some clarity. If you pick up on something, please share it with us and we will do likewise. It needs to be a joint effort.

We have always considered ourselves friends as well as business associates. Tough



Roland Bates
President

INSPECTOR KNOWS BEST



Joe Hartman
Morgantown, WV

Joe Hartman recently received a call from an agent who asked if he remembered an inspection he did about two months ago on a fairly new house. Joe told the agent that the buyer's father had called him three times, had his contractor call him twice, and both the father and the father's contractor flew into town to check the house again.

Afterward, the buyer's father sent Joe a letter detailing all the items he thought Joe had neglected to put in the report, such as "unprofessional paint job."

The buyer's father had called the agent to complain that his daughter tried to run the air conditioner, and it didn't work. When the agent called Joe to ask about it, Joe told him that it is difficult to photograph an A/C unit to verify that it works, but - not only did it work when he inspected it, but he had taken pictures of the cold line dripping condensation onto, and rusting the cabinet of the furnace. Joe told the agent to show the buyer's father those pictures to prove the operation, because there wouldn't have been any condensation if the unit wasn't running!

The broker sent an HVAC worker to the address to double-check the condenser unit, and found that the buyer's father hadn't trusted anyone in the local area to do the repairs, and had therefore sent his own contractor to do some work on the house. It turned out that the unit was working fine until the father's contractor installed a programmable thermostat and hooked it up wrong! Joe said he hasn't gotten his apology yet!

GPI ARBITRATION CLAUSE

We are going to insert ADR Institute of Canada, Inc., into the GPI preinspection agreement in our inspection software, because CAS is no longer accepting home inspection cases. You may wish to insert that name or the following ADR Institute clause in your preinspection agreement:

"All disputes arising out of or in connection with this agreement, or in respect of any legal relationship associated with or derived from this agreement, shall be finally resolved by arbitration pursuant to the National Arbitration Rules of the ADR Institute of Canada, Inc. The place of arbitration shall be [specify City and Province of Canada]. The language of the arbitration shall be English."

Customers may contact the ADR Institute of Canada, Inc. or their local affiliate to begin an arbitration case.

For more information on ADR Institute of Canada, Inc., go to www.adrcanaa.ca.

MISTAKE TURNED MARKETING TOOL



Brent Sostrom
Elk Grove, CA

Brent Sostrom inspected a home that had an external gas line installed into the laundry room, but he didn't call the fact that it was buried in the ground without being painted, sealed or preserved in any way.

When the new owner went to hook up her gas dryer, there wasn't gas in the line. The gas company came out and dug around and discovered the line was rusted and actually disconnected from the meter.

Brent got a call from the owner who told him he missed the problem during the inspection, and Brent offered to go over right away and look at the situation. After looking closer, Brent agreed that he should have called the pipe as improperly buried and offered to help get a gas line installed.

On a positive note, Brent was able to meet a plumber who gave them a great deal. The owner was happy, and the agent was so impressed at how Brent handled the situation that he has since received three referrals from that agent, which more than paid for the repair.

Brent said the moral of the story is: Handling mistakes properly is great marketing. Mistakes will happen, but choosing to avoid responsibility to make things right will not curry any favor and cost more in the long run.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations on passing the Washington State Licensing Exam!



Dave McCone
Bellevue, WA

IMPORTANT RECALL

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, CPSC, in cooperation with Frigidaire, announced a voluntary recall of about 200,000 certain Frigidaire and Kenmore Elite Smoothtop Electric Ranges. Depending on the model, the surface heating elements can: 1) turn on spontaneously without being switched on; 2) fail to turn off after being switched off, or, 3) heat to different temperatures than selected. This poses a fire and burn hazard to consumers.



This recall involves Frigidaire, Frigidaire Gallery, Frigidaire Professional and Kenmore Elite smoothtop electric ranges with rotary knobs and digital displays.

Consumers should stop using the recalled ranges immediately and contact Frigidaire or Sears to schedule a free repair.

For more information and a complete list of recalled models and serial numbers, go to <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prhtml09/09333.html>.

GOOGLE LOCAL MAPS LISTING

If you haven't added your NPI/GPI listing to Google Local Maps, it is a great way to advertise for free!

To check to see if your business is listed in your local area on Google Local Maps:

1. Go to www.google.com or www.google.ca (for Canada)
2. Click on "Maps"
3. Type in your business name, city and state (or province) in the search box
4. If you see your listing, click on it and then click on "edit" to check it and/or correct it.
5. Make sure your address, phone, e-mail and Web site are correct. We noticed that most of the NPI/GPI local listings use on the corporate name URL. You should change that to your own home page URL so prospects can go directly to your home page.

If you don't see your listing, you can add your business to the Google Local Maps directory by clicking on "Put your business on Google Maps" or by going to www.google.com/localbusinesscenter.

6. Once you add your business or edit your listing, you will need to verify the changes with Google before they go live online. Just follow Google's instructions on how to verify your listing or the changes you submit.

If you have questions, call Bill ext. 19 or Luke ext. 12.

YOUR CORPORATE CONTACTS

Roland Bates x18 roland.bates@npiweb.com
 Bill Erickson x19 bill.erickson@npiweb.com
 Connie Carlson x21 connie.carlson@npiweb.com
 Debbie Fibich x16 debbie.fibich@npiweb.com
 Dee Little x10 dee.little@npiweb.com
 Julie Erickson x24 julie.erickson@npiweb.com
 Kenn Garder x30 kenn.garder@npiweb.com
 Kim Gatson x23 kim.gatson@npiweb.com
 Luke Armstrong x12 luke.armstrong@npiweb.com
 Meghan Murphy x15 meghan.murphy@npiweb.com
 Molly Johnson x25 molly.johnson@npiweb.com
 Nancy Ressel x11 nancy.resset@npiweb.com
 Randy Yates x33 randy.yates@npiweb.com
 Terry Wilson x31 terry.wilson@npiweb.com

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations on your anniversary with National Property Inspections, Inc.



David Marshall
Phoenix, AZ

20 YEARS



Glen Fisher
Oaklyn, NJ

20 YEARS



Jason Bancroft
Gilbertsville, PA

5 YEARS

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

Help us welcome the newest members of our NPI/GPI family.



Don Andrews
Mississauga, ON



Tim Bezaire
Windsor, ON



Brad Dawkins
College Station, TX



Bret Dawkins
Williamson County,
TN



Pat Standefer
Dallas, TX



Edward Lannon
Destin, FL

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations on passing the Lead Base Paint Testing Exam!



Andy Alvarez
El Centro, CA

FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

times brings people closer together and this past year that kinship seems stronger than ever. Going forward, let us all strive to be bigger and better and to continue to look out for each other. We have to do it for ourselves; no one will do it for us. Thank all of you for being a part of NPI/GPI.

Please stay in touch.

WI-FI HACKERS

Security experts warn that hackers may be disguising themselves as free public Wi-Fi providers in hopes of gaining access to people's laptops. All it takes is a downloaded computer program from the Internet, an open access point, and a user who has ignored basic security advice.

This problem is not just happening at airports, it is happening with the wide spread use of Wi-Fi networks at hotels, coffee shops and more. If you're surfing the web, there's not too much to worry about using an open network. However, if you're online shopping, banking or checking confidential company e-mail or information, it is advised to exercise caution. The best way to protect sensitive information is to use a Virtual Private Network, VPN, which encrypts the data moving to and from your laptop.

The next time you are at an airport or at a local café, you may want to rethink accessing public Wi-Fi for confidential information. There are always internet hackers that are trying to gain access to your personal information.

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NATIONAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS, INC

9375 BURT STREET, SUITE 201
OMAHA, NE 68114
PHONE (800) 333-9807



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

October 2009

TOPIC: Finger-jointed Lumber



Photo by: Universal Forest Products

Finger-jointed products are manufactured by taking shorter pieces of quality kiln-dried lumber, machining a “finger” profile in each end of the short-length pieces, adding an appropriate structural adhesive and squeezing the pieces together to make longer pieces of lumber. Although finger joining is used in several wood product manufacturing processes, including horizontal joints for glulam manufacture, the term finger-jointed lumber applies to dimensional lumber. It is important to understand and know the difference.

There are two categories of finger-jointed lumber, depending on their intended end use. The first category, sometimes referred to as Structural Finger Joint, uses phenol-resorcinol formaldehyde adhesive, as used in panel products or in glue-laminated timber. This allows the product to be used in either vertical or horizontal load applications. The second category, Vertical Stud Use Only, typically uses a polyvinyl acetate adhesive and, as indicated by its name, is for vertical use only (i.e. studs). Both products may be used interchangeably with solid sawn lumber in terms of strength and end use. A description of both products is provided in Table 1 on the right.

	VERTICAL STUD USE ONLY	Structural Fingerjoint
Grade Stamp Designation (Examples)	Both must appear SPS 3 CERT FGR JNT or CERT CLUED JNTS	SPS1 CERT FGR JNT or CERT EXT JNTS ¹
Grade Stamp Facsimile		
Product Standards	SPS 3 and C/QC 101.97	SPS 1 and C/QC 101.97
Comparison to Non-Finger-jointed Lumber	Intended for use as wall studs, limited to normal short term bending and tension loads	Fully interchangeable with lumber of the same grade and species
Permissible Uses	Load bearing studs ² , non-load bearing studs, locations where any bending or tension stresses are of short duration (e.g., wind or earthquakes), interior use ⁴ only	Load bearing studs, Non-load bearing studs, Headers, lintels, built-up beams, Floor and roof joists, etc., Interior or exterior use
Adhesives	Typically polyvinyl acetate and white-colored, but can be any glue which meets the applicable standards	Phenol-resorcinol or equivalent performance that meets or exceeds ASTM D2559 or CSA O112.7, dark colored
Grades Allowed ³	Stud, Construction, Standard, recently added: No.1, No.2, No.3	Select Structural (SS), No.1, No.2
Dimensions ³ and Lengths	2x2', 2x3', 2x4', 2x6' 8' to 12'	2x2', 2x3', 2x4', 2x6', 2x8', 2x10', 2x12' 8' to 40'

¹ This designation can also be used under Vertical Stud Use Only finger-jointed lumber, but is not common.
² Except in the case where longer term bending or tension loads are applied, such as with soil loads acting on a permanent wood foundation.
³ Highlighted items are those most commonly produced.
⁴ Interior use means inside the building envelope which includes studs in the exterior walls of a building.

Photo by: Universal Forest Products

Stud Uses

The most common use of finger-jointed lumber is in exterior shear walls and load bearing walls as studs. The most important factor for studs is straightness. Finger-jointed studs will stay straighter than solid sawn studs when subjected to heat or humidity. This



feature results in significant benefits to the builder and the home owner, including a superior building, the elimination of nail pops in drywall and other related wall problems. This also makes finger-jointed lumber with a “stud” grade mark an ideal candidate for interior non-load bearing partitions.

Product Acceptance

The National Lumber Grades Authority (NLGA) in Canada was one of the first certified rules-writing agencies to develop finger-jointed lumber standards, SPS 1 and SPS 3, and hence has one of the most recognizable grade markings that include the product standard designation on it.

In December 1999, the SPS 3 standard was revised by the NLGA to allow additional grades to be produced under the standard and to include the new grademark designation, “Vertical Stud Use Only”. Lumber with this grade mark is typically “stud” grade, which is separately marked on the grade stamp. Vertical Stud Use Only describes how it is commonly used; however it is not limited to this use.

I-joint Uses

Finger-jointed lumber is also commonly used for flange material in wood I-joists. This application of the product requires the wood fibers and the glued joint to resist long-term tension loads when in use. For this reason, finger-jointed lumber used for manufacture of I-joists must comply with the requirements of a standard, such as SPS1. Wood I-joint manufacturers undertake additional quality assessment procedures during production.

For more information, go to www.cwc.ca/NR/rdonlyres/676CFE65.../Fingerjointedlumber.pdf.



COMMERCIAL TECHNICAL BULLETIN

October 2009

TOPIC: Tensioned Fabric Membrane

The idea behind tension membrane has been around for as long as man has created structures for shelter. As the name suggests, tension fabric membrane utilizes fabric in complete tension, or the act of pulling apart, as a primary roofing material. Tension membrane systems rely on cables or steel framing as a base support. Tension fabric roofs are able to provide durable protection over great distances with very little material.



Photo by: Birdair, Inc.

There are three main types of tension fabric used in architectural applications: PVC coated polyester, silicon coated fiberglass and Teflon coated fiberglass. The bottom layer of the tension fabric is a base fabric, usually made out of polyester or fiberglass. This fabric is created with fibers that run perpendicular and are woven in and out of each other. The end result is an incredibly strong material. Fiberglass has a tensile strength of 3200 Mega-Pascal. To put this number in perspective, structural steel only has a tensile strength of roughly 250 Mega-

Pascal.

Once the base fabric has been created, an exterior coating is applied. Generally, the type of exterior coating used appears in the beginning of the product name. The most commonly used coatings are Teflon and PVC. Teflon is a durable coating that guards against ultraviolet radiation, moisture and microorganism infestation. Both coatings are self-cleaning, meaning that dust, dirt, ash and chemical pollutants all wash off in the presence of water. PVC coatings are more susceptible to UV radiation and usually have a shorter life span.

The membrane can be welded with a PVC polymer to create very durable and secure joints. It can also be fastened to a roof deck with mechanical fasteners, spaced approximately 18 inches apart. It is usually secured through the tab, as shown in the picture to the right. This eliminates fastener penetration of the finished roof product by allowing the membrane to roll over the tab and fasteners.



Photo by: Birdair, Inc.

This technical bulletin has been drafted to be general in nature and not technically exhaustive.



As building owners and architects look to meet green building codes, tensioned membrane roofing's attributes make it a practical roofing choice. The roofing system uses fewer materials and requires less structural steel support to hold the roof in place. Minimizing the amount of structural steel reduces a building's carbon footprint.



Photo by: Birdair, Inc.

Fabric membrane roofing systems offer the energy-efficient benefits associated with cool roofing; high solar reflectance and thermal emittance, durability and natural daylighting. They filter the amount of sunlight entering a facility and effectively reduce the need for artificial light during the day.

In addition to daylighting, fabric roofing lends a variety of other functional benefits to facilities. This includes the recent innovation of allowing it to be insulated like standard roofing while still maintaining translucency. In the

past, insulation could only be achieved by installing fabric membrane without any insulative value and then separately installing traditional insulation materials that block the natural sunlight.

As a groundbreaking new development, insulated fabric roofing now solves that challenge, featuring two layers of fabric membrane on either side of a feather-light insulation layer that significantly enhances the material's thermal performance. The insulation layer consists of aerogel with an air content of 95 percent, making it the lightest solid material in the world. This layer reduces solar heat gain in warm exterior conditions and retains warmer air in cold exterior conditions, meeting increasingly demanding energy and building codes related to structural envelope thermal values.

Fabric membrane roofing has been used since the 1970s and has a life expectancy of over 25 years. The variety of long term sustainable, functional and aesthetic benefits that fabric membrane roofing offers makes it a smart choice for a facility looking to maintain a high performance building envelope and LEED certification.

For more information, go to www.birdair.com.