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## EIFS

### Heads West



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# EIFS Council's EQI Program Heads West

By / Jessica Kirby  
photos courtesy of John Garbin

The EIFS Council of Canada (ECC) has headed west with its EIFS Quality Assurance Program (EQI) as it prepares for accelerated EIFS market share growth. The program officially launched last summer in Ontario and rolled out to Western Canada in November 2011.

“This is a game changer for the cladding space,” says John Garbin, president and CEO of the EIFS Council of Canada. “It’s the first certified quality assurance program for any cladding system in North America.”

More than 180 industry members participated in a recent EQI Technical Review and exam session in Toronto, and more than 625 EIFS mechanics, manufacturer representatives, and EQI auditors have participated in similar sessions across the country to date.

“The Toronto session was probably the largest one-time gathering ever in North America of EIFS industry personnel writing a certification exam of any kind,”



says Garbin. "It could also be seen as one of the largest sessions of its kind in any industry."

Four such sessions have been held in Western Canadian cities throughout December, January, and February, including one at the BC Wall and Ceiling

office in Surrey. Additional sessions are scheduled in Halifax, Ottawa, Calgary, and Toronto from mid-February through March.

EQI has several key components including research and development, standards and specifications,

certification & licensing, site auditing, conflict resolution, and third party warranty assurance. Certified and licensed EIFS professionals will be active in all levels of the system's use from design through manufacturing of materials to assembly and in-place performance audits.

Under EQI, manufacturer products and systems are evaluated against EIFS Standards criteria and, when successful, the manufacturer is certified and licensed.

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accredited based on compliance with all contractual, financial, and administrative procedures and processes required by EQI and are licensed to use the EQI trademarks.

EIFS installers, or mechanics as they are designated, undertake a certification and licensing process in accordance with ISO 17024 Conformity assessment – General guidelines for bodies operating certification of persons, whereby their knowledge of EIFS is tested and confirmed against

EIFS installation standards and requirements.

Accredited contractors are required to document the installation process to confirm that the project requirements have been met. In addition, EQI auditors will continuously audit EIFS projects in accordance with program requirements.

“EQI is contractually engaged when it comes to projects registered in EQI and we have complete control over the EIFS in the project,” says Garbin.

“This empowerment is mandated and will be exercised when needed without compromise.”

The program also includes third party warranty assurance, which provides coverage when the manufacturer and/or contractor are unable or unwilling to correct deficiencies they are responsible for.

The EIFS Council of Canada formed a not-for-profit corporation called the EIFS Quality Assurance Program Inc. (EQI), which owns the intellectual property rights and trademarks of the EIFS QAP and will be responsible for the overall operation of the program.

More than 370 million square meters (four billion square feet) of EIFS have been installed in commercial, industrial, and residential construction in North America over the past 40 years.

The cladding is poised for growth, thanks to expanding building code requirements across North America calling for external insulation that provides a continuous thermal layer outboard of the sheathing.

Revisions to the National Energy Code calling for further improvements in energy efficiency and performance are also driving the momentum of EIFS and the EQI program, says Garbin. The new National Energy Code was ratified in 2011 and will be progressing towards adoption at the provincial levels across Canada.

“The new energy code will be much more prescriptive and is better aligned with current code language,” says Garbin. “It sets the table perfectly for EIFS and will be a significant driver for our growth.”

The growth expectations also come as a result of the completion of ULC S716 EIFS National Standards which are proposed for adoption and inclusion in the upcoming revision to the National Building Code.

“Without having those standards in place there was no established industry reference guidelines for the user and




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regulatory community to utilize and enforce,” says Garbin. “These EIFS Standards are now published and available to the marketplace.”

The unique part of the EIFS Standards is the Part 3 Design component which goes beyond the typical materials and installation parts found in current industry standards.

“EIFS is the first product and/or technology with a dedicated design standard targeted at the design community. We are definitely pioneers on the standards front,” says Garbin.

“It may have taken a little longer to complete the release of the standards but it will provide tremendous assistance to the marketplace and sets the precedent for other industry standards to follow.”

Next on the drawing board for the ECC is the release of the new EIFS Practice Manual, a comprehensive design and educational resource for use by anyone involved with specifying or constructing EIFS. ■



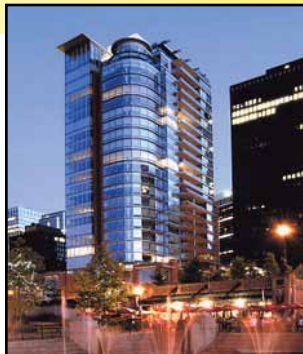
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