



Looking for Standards for Flanged Window Installation in Drainage Plane Systems

by Myles F. Corcoran

Is there a drainage plane window installation standard - or standards? What is it? Should such standards, if they exist, change by regional and building exposure factors?

Mr. Corcoran has been working with damaged buildings since 1980. He has seen hundreds of buildings with window installation failures. He and his firm, Myles F. Corcoran Construction Consulting, Inc., discover the causes of these leaks, design fixes, and oversee repairs of the damage, as well as design and provide assistance for renovations and new buildings. Mr. Corcoran acts as private mediator and arbitrator in construction disputes and has been engaged as expert witness in a great many such disputes from 1988 to the present.

In this talk Mr. Corcoran will discuss the concept of "Standard of Care" generally through common definitions, the view from the current California Building Code, designers, consultants and from the builders job site perspective. Mr. Corcoran will also ask why anyone should care if a "Standard of Care" exists. Might it not be better if we "let freedom ring" with the simple criteria being "water may not pass?" - or less?

From there, Mr. Corcoran will do a brief overview of what he knows of past and present common practices. We will look at examples from 1880, 1980, and the growing level of awareness and detail leading to current common practices: from wood trim overlapping wide gaps, to a paper sandwich of very thin asphalt with sisal strand reinforcement, to SAF, and beyond. We will review examples of current methods: Manufacturers, ASTM, AAMA, observations from the field, and finally Mr. Corcoran's own company standard.

In the final part, Mr. Corcoran will return to the question: Is there a "Standard of Care" and if so - what is it, or are they? With the AAMA, ASTM, many manufacturers, and select authors on the subject, all weighing in on how they think windows should be installed, can we and should we ever agree on any one "Standard" method?

Although we may not come to any final conclusions, Mr. Corcoran believes that when the designing, building, and consulting industry collaborates, we improve the level at which society builds.

