



FENBC's Technical Conference

Thought leaders and fenestration gurus from Vancouver and beyond converged at Surrey's Northview golf course on February 28th for the Fenestration Association of BC's annual Technical Conference and AGM. Back by popular demand, FENBC's Code Talkers panel discussion returned to tackle the labyrinth of code interpretation and compliance issues facing western Canada's building envelope industry. Moderated by Ply Gem's Dave Goldsmith, the panel consisted of Al Jaugelis & David Vadocz of RDH Building Science Inc., Centra Construction Group's Anton Van Dyk, Gary Brown of SGB Services, Thomas Zaremba of Roetzel and Andress and Vetrotech Saint Gobain's Joseph Taylor. The fast paced discussion started where it left off after FENBC's October 2018 Industry Conference with a feisty dialogue ranging from safety issues with wired glass, understanding acoustical glazing specifications, common problems with mullions as well as egress windows, sash restrictors and guard loads.

Goldsmith highlighted many of the changes under the BC Building Act. "The Act establishes the Province as the sole authority to set building requirements for the construction, repair and demolition of buildings. The objective is to create more consistent building requirements across BC, while providing local governments with flexibility to meet their needs."

According to Goldsmith, the Act establishes qualification requirements for building officials to improve consistency in how the BC Building Code is interpreted, applied and enforced. It also supports local governments and other local authorities through the implementation of a provincial review process to evaluate innovative building proposals.

Lightheartedly dubbed "the conference that never ends", presentations were broken out into commercial and residential streams to appeal to the wide-ranging audience. Residential seminars included window and door installation techniques by Mike Battistel of Cascadia Windows and CEA Energy Hot2000 Modeling by Einar Halbig of E3 ECO Group Inc.

The commercial seminars included a deep dive on wired glass from Thomas Zaremba of Roetzel & Andress where Zaremba warned attendees that there is a new sheriff in town. "As soon as a safety standard comes into effect in your jurisdiction, that standard can be introduced as evidence of due care," said Zaremba. "Or the opposite is true." It's shouldn't be news that the Canadian General Standards Board has mandated that wired glass is not safety glass and cannot be used in an application where human impact is possible. Even for replacements.

Arthur Huard of VIG Technologies provided an eye opening presentation on Vacuum Insulated Glazing sparking massive audience engagement that will be covered in further detail in a future update from FENBC.

What is the future of the state of the industry in BC going to look like in 2032? RDH's Graham Finch gave the keynote presentation "How the new BC Energy Step Code Will Impact Window Selection and Detailing" to provide more insight into that question.



“I was asked to speak today about where things are going in the window industry with a vision ahead for the next 10 or 15 years,” said Finch. According to Finch, triple glazing will occupy the greatest amount of space across the residential and commercial sectors. “So we’re all going to be a long stronger, right?” said Finch. “These windows are going to be installed in new looking walls with roughly two times the effective argon in all types of buildings. We’re going to care more about installation details and thermal improvement. Those are the three big things that are going to change over the next few years until 2032.”

What is driving these changes? The Step Code. Finch explained that the BC Energy Step Code was pieced together from a number of other programs that already existed. “It’s not new ideas,” said Finch. “It is a collection of the best ideas from the different energy programs focused into one program. The vision for 2032 is we’re going to be in a market we have a lot more heavier glazed windows. We’re going to figure out how to manage them and get over it because that’s what is going to be required.”

“When you look at your market and the opportunities and your current product offerings today, this is where you need to shoot for,” said Finch. “In terms of product development or tweaks to systems, can you get to 1.2 u-value by putting decent triple glazed units into your existing frames. Can you get there? And if you can’t, maybe you’re done.”

The next FENBC event will be the association’s annual golf tournament on May 16th at the Northview Golf & Country Club.

Rich Porayko
Construction Creative Marketing