



INTERNATIONAL WINDOW CLEANING ASSOCIATION

November 19, 2007

To the Glass Association of North America:

The International Window Cleaning Association recently became aware, through *Glass Magazine*, that you are establishing a task group to develop a new glass-cleaning bulletin. The stated problem that inspired this action was “the use of metal scrapers by window cleaners... Scrapers can cause serious scratches on tempered glass, thought to be caused by the presence of fabricating debris on the surface.”

Unfortunately, this “problem” is blamed on window cleaners and the use of scrapers instead of glass fabricators who are producing heat-treated glass with excess fabricating debris on its surface. The IWCA believes that the presence of fabricating debris on tempered and heat-strengthened glass is an easily preventable surface defect. This defect presents a serious maintenance problem to the owner of the glass for the life of the glass.

The standard tool used by window cleaning professionals, janitorial contractors, advertising artists, tint film companies and homeowners is the metal scraper. The use of a metal scraper is the industry standard for removing debris such as paint, concrete and drywall mud, and does not scratch uncoated glass. Alternatives such as solvents, chemicals and acids can be harmful to seals, surrounding surfaces and the environment and can be hazardous to the person using them.

When a metal scraper is used to remove construction debris from poor quality heat-treated glass, the scraper dislodges defects and drags them along the glass, resulting in excess scratching to the glass surface. This has been proven repeatedly and can be clearly seen on our website www.iwca.org.

This issue is a direct result of some glass fabricators not maintaining their facilities in a responsible manner, which would prevent the presence of excess fabricating debris. While perfect glass is not the expectation, our customers do expect a product that can be cleaned without damage. This is continuously achieved by many fabricators in the glass industry and could be accomplished by all with current recommended maintenance procedures of equipment and the fabricating facility as a whole.

The IWCA recommends the Glass Association of North America retract its current *Proper Procedures for Cleaning Architectural Glass Products Bulletin* on the grounds that metal scrapers have been the standard for removing construction debris from uncoated glass for decades, scrapers do not scratch glass and scrapers do remain the standard. The IWCA also recommends the retraction of GANA’s *Heat-Treated Glass Surfaces Are Different Bulletin* on the grounds that it misleads the public in believing all heat-treated products have an “inherent” surface condition (excess fabricating debris) that should be acceptable, which is not true.

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The *IWCA Tempered Glass Bulletin 2004 – Scrapers & Fabricating Debris* represents the IWCA's official position on this issue. While the IWCA is open to dialog, we do not wish to be recognized as collaborating with the Glass Association of North America or its task group to provide subjective educational materials or assist in the development of such documents that would negatively affect the window cleaning industry or the public. Please remove all references to the IWCA supporting or contributing to GANA's efforts.

The Glass Association of North America should not attempt to pass the blame on to the Window Cleaning Professionals through its bulletins for scratches on heat-treated glass surfaces that are a result of fabricating debris defects. The members of the Glass Association of North America should be responsible for defects in the products they produce, including the replacement of glass with fabricating debris at their expense.

Respectfully,

IWCA Tempered Glass Quality Committee on behalf of The International Window Cleaning Association

CC: GANA Board of Directors

GANA Headquarters

US Glass Magazine

Glass Magazine

Professional Window Cleaner magazine

American Window Cleaner

Builder magazine

Facility Management Journal