

Press Information

Press Contacts:

Heather West, Heather West Public Relations
E-mail: heatherwest@earthlink.net; 612-724-8760

Angela Dickson, marketing manager, AAMA
Email: adickson@aamanet.org; 714-596-3574

August 25, 2008

AAMA Skylight Council Leads Initiative to Address Fall Protection

SCHAUMBURG, Ill. – The American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA) Skylight Council is proactively addressing industry-related fall protection concerns through the formation of the Skylight Fall Protection Task Group and forthcoming position paper.

Disturbing accounts of individuals falling through roof openings, typically reported as skylights, have increased the urgency in developing fall protection standards and prevention measures. Earlier this year, the Skylight Fall Protection Task Group was formed by members of the Skylight Council to monitor and influence the work of the ASTM E06 WK 17797 work group developing a skylight human impact standard. “The [Skylight] Fall Protection Task Group is looking to develop a reasonable standard based on the historical data related to falls through skylights,” says John Lewis, AAMA technical director. “The ASTM group has found that useful, credible data has proven to be problematic to obtain,” he adds. Without such data, it becomes difficult to determine the extent of the problem, and this makes developing a standard more challenging.

During AAMA’s National Summer Conference held June 1-4, the Skylight Fall Protection Task Group met for the first time and drafted its guiding scope which states, “To investigate and monitor the issue of fall protection related to skylights with an initial focus of participating in the development of a human impact test standard.” A revised version of the scope is currently being reviewed by AAMA and the ASTM Working Group for the *Specification of Human Impact Criteria, with Procedure for Testing and Rating Plastic-Glazed Unit Skylights and Related Products used on Commercial Walkable Roofs for Fall-Through Resistance*. Numerous conference calls have taken place since this initial meeting to further the initiatives of this task group, and AAMA members will also meet to discuss this topic further during the upcoming National Fall Conference to be held September 20-24.

The issue of fall protection raises numerous questions for investigation. When falls occur, is the manufacturer at fault? What is the actual number of falls specifically through skylights? What types of skylights were involved? What are the circumstances surrounding the fall? For the Skylight Council, however, the most important question to answer is how to prevent these falls. This is the basis of the Skylight Council’s position paper on fall protection, which will be released later this year.



The position paper seeks to not only present the Skylight Council's response to information presented to the industry and public regarding skylight-related falls, but also provide practical suggestions for minimizing and preventing falls through roof openings.

"The intent of this document is to prevent a human from falling onto a surface below," said John Westerfield (CrystaLite Inc.), chair of the Skylight Fall Protection Task Group, during a recent conference call. The position paper is currently in review with the Skylight Council.

AAMA has created a Web page supplement to the Skylight Council's home page

<http://www.aamanet.org/news.asp?sect=1&id=291>, featuring fall protection-related articles and news. For more information on the Skylight Council and the Skylight Fall Protection Task Group, please email John Lewis, technical director, at jlewis@aamanet.org.

*AAMA is the source of performance standards, product certification,
and educational programs for the fenestration industry.SM*