

What are the options under the new law?

- Local product approval, which means that the product is approved only for that particular jurisdiction or for a specific project.
- Statewide product approval can be obtained under the optional statewide product approval program. The choice to seek an optional statewide approval is at the discretion of the manufacturer.

What products are covered by the Florida Product Approval system?

The covered products are those that affect the structural integrity of buildings. They are:

- Windows
- Skylights
- Exterior doors
- Shutters
- Roofing
- Panel walls
- Structural Components
- New and innovative building envelope products

Exceptions:

Structural components covered by the United States Department of Commerce Product Standards [such as concrete/masonry] and are subject to standardized field testing procedures contained within nationally recognized standards adopted within the Code may demonstrate compliance by a batch ticket or bill of lading made available at the site of assembly or placement.

These categories of products must be approved using the standardized Florida Product Approval System *either by the local building department for local use, or by the Florida Building Commission for statewide use.*

Is product approval required for every single product used in a building?

As stated above, categories of products covered by the Florida Product Approval System must be approved using the methods prescribed in the Florida Product Approval System, either by the local building department for local use, or by the Florida Building Commission for statewide use. Other products must demonstrate compliance with the Florida Building Code through the normal plans review process. In both cases, materials and/or components that are used in the installation of these products would not, as long as these materials and/or components are provided and installed as specified by the manufacturer of the product.

Some examples of these are:

- **Roofing systems:** The system would receive the product approval, and the components such as nails, screws, adhesives and the like would be accepted as part of the overall system approval, as long as they were provided and installed as specified by the roofing system manufacturer.
- **Connectors:** Nails used to attach truss joists, hurricane clips, wall studs, and the like, would be accepted as part of the connector approval, as long as they were provided and installed as specified by the connector manufacturer.
- **Panel Walls:** Nails, screws, adhesives, and other fasteners used to attach siding, soffits, EIFS, storefronts, and the like, would be accepted as part of the overall system approval, as long as they were provided and installed as specified by the panel wall manufacturer.

How is the new product approval program different for what was done before?

Previously, independent monitoring (Quality Assurance) of the manufacture of a product was only required where the Code required a product to be "listed" or "labeled" by an approved agency, such as Underwriters Laboratories.

Now, products in the eight categories identified above must also have independent monitoring of their manufacturing in addition to those products the Code requires to be "listed" or "labeled".

Previously building officials would accept test and evaluation reports and listings from "nationally recognized" entities and licensed engineers.

Now, for the eight products, only entities such as evaluation entities, testing laboratories, certification agencies, quality assurance agencies, approved by the Florida Building Commission may be used by a manufacturer to demonstrate compliance with the Code. Additionally, Florida licensed engineers and architects may issue evaluation reports.

Does each product approval application have to be submitted with proof of an audited quality assurance program?

No. Products that have an approved certification mark or listing do not require proof of an audited quality assurance program because this requirement must be met in order to get the certification mark or listing.

What about quality assurance for those products not covered by the Florida Product Approval System?

Since the Commission will only approve entities for the evaluation of the eight categories of products that are covered by the law, it is up to the local jurisdiction to approve all other products for use in their jurisdiction, but they can use similar approval criteria.

What is required for local approval?

A completed "Application for Local Product Approval" must be submitted to the local jurisdiction (See Attachment 1), along with the following required product information:

- Product Name and model number (if any)
- Name, address, reports, and report numbers from at least one of the applicable entities:
 - Approved Testing Entity with proof of a third party quality assurance program
 - Approved Evaluation Entity with proof of a third party quality assurance program
 - Approved Certification Entity
- Evaluation Report from a Florida registered engineer or architect with proof of a third party quality assurance program
- List of the code sections and reference standards with which the product complies
- List of limitations on the product's compliance and use
- Installation instruction for the product

What are local jurisdictions required to do now?

It depends on whether the product has a statewide approval or local approval.

- **Products with Statewide Product Approval:**

The product can be accepted through the plans review process upon confirmation of statewide approval through a listing on the BCIS product approval website (www.floridabuilding.org) and that the product is being used in accordance with its limitations of use.

- **Products without Statewide Approval:**

Products without optional Statewide approval have four different options for local approval. (see below). The role of the local jurisdiction is to verify competent proof of compliance with the Code, making sure the product is being used consistent with the limitations of use established by the evaluation. The review of documentation is only to verify the following:

- It is a report in good standing (not rescinded, suspended or revoked).
- That the entity that evaluated the product is independent of the manufacturer and properly accredited/approved.
- That the standard the product is evaluated to is correct, and that there is a statement of compliance with the standard included in the report.

1. Products submitted with a certification mark or listing.

This category requires documentation showing the following information:

- A certification mark or a listing from an approved certification agency.
- A certification that the product complies with the standards adopted by the Code.

This category does not require any evaluation or test reports, or proof of an audited quality assurance program.

2. Products submitted with test reports.

This category requires documentation showing the following information:

- A product test report from an approved testing lab showing which products are covered by the report.
- Verifiable documentation that the product complies with the Code.
- Proof that the product is manufactured under an audited quality assurance program.

3. Products submitted with an evaluation report from an Evaluation Entity.

This category requires documentation showing the following information:

- A product evaluation report from an approved evaluation entity, based on testing or comparative rational analysis, or a combination of both.
- The report indicates that the product is in compliance with the intent of the Code, or equivalent to that required by the Code.
- Proof that the product is manufactured under an audited quality assurance program.

4. Products submitted with an evaluation report from a Florida registered architect or engineer.

This category requires documentation showing the following information:

- A signed and sealed product evaluation report based on testing or comparative rational analysis, or a combination of both.
- The report indicates that the product is in compliance with the intent of the Code, or equivalent to that required by the Code.
- Proof that the product is manufactured under an audited quality assurance program.

How will these product approval requirements affect local plan review approval?

All products in the eight categories must be approved using the uniform Florida Product Approval System, either optional statewide approval or local approval, in order to obtain plan approval. Ensure that the product is being used in accordance within its conditions of use. This is required in order to be in compliance with the product approval requirements.

Where can one find a list of the approved agencies?

The list of approved agencies in each category can be printed from the Department of Community Affairs Florida Building Code web page at (www.floridabuilding.org).

- Click on the Product Approval link on the left side of the page, and then click on organization search.
- Once the organization is located, click on its name to determine its scope of accreditation.
- For example, a certification agency that has been accredited by ANSI to perform certification of fenestration products only should not be used to certify trusses.
- Similarly, not all testing laboratories can perform all tests. The scope of accreditation will list the tests for which the laboratory is approved.

Who has to submit the required information to the local jurisdiction for approval?

The product manufacturer or the design professional can submit the required application for local approval. Once a product has received local approval, whether it is from a submittal from the manufacturer or the design professional, the application does not have to be repeated.

If an application for product approval is tailored for a site specific project, the required information must be resubmitted for a general local approval or another site specific approval.

Is an application for local product approval needed for each product?

No. A manufacturer can submit one application for each product subcategory and then attach a list of the products being submitted for approval. It is important, however, to group the products according to the product subcategory, and to indicate the supporting documentation is a certification mark or listing, a test report, an evaluation report from an evaluation entity, or an evaluation report from a Florida registered architect or engineer.

What is the best way to provide the product approval information to the local jurisdiction, once the product has been approved, either locally or by the State?

For statewide approval, consult the Florida Building Code website: (www.floridabuilding.org). If a local jurisdiction does not have computer access, call the Department of Community Affairs at 850-487-1824. For local approval, each jurisdiction will determine the applicability of the available information.

These guidelines are intended as another Building Department tool for understanding and applying the Florida Product Approval processes. Although the information contained herein is believed to be accurate and correct, BOAF does not warrant it as such. The only true guidelines are published in the applicable Florida Statutes and Rule.

Attachment 1

Form No.: 9B-72.130(4)

October 2005

Florida Building Commission

Application for Local Product Approval

Note: This application is only for approval by local jurisdictions for the following categories of products: panel walls, exterior doors, roofing, skylights, windows, shutters and structural components or for products comprising a building's envelope introduced as a result of new technology.

1. Application for Approval by Method 1/Method 2 (circle one) for the following category of product:

2. Name of Applicant (Company) _____

3. Mailing Address _____

4. Telephone No. (_____) _____ FAX No. (_____) _____

5. E-Mail Address _____

6. Name and title of applicant's technical representative (if any)

Address (if different from address of applicant)

Telephone No. (_____) _____ FAX No. (_____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Florida Professional Registration No. (if any) _____

Florida Professional Firm Registration No. (if any) _____

7. Name of approved third party quality assurance entity

Address _____

Telephone No. (_____) _____ FAX No. (_____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Name of authorized representative _____

Florida Professional Registration No. (if any) _____

Florida Professional Firm Registration No. (if any) _____

8. Provide the following information on a separate sheet

- Product name and model number (if any)
- Name, address, reports, and applicable report numbers of:
 - a. Testing entity
 - b. Evaluation entity
 - c. Certification entity
- List of requirements the product complies with including Code section numbers and reference standards
- List of limitations on product's compliance and use
- Installation instructions for the product

9. Other information

Give any other information that may be of assistance to the local jurisdiction in considering this application.
(Attach a separate sheet, if needed.)

10. Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of applicant

Signature _____

Date _____