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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## TCNA LABORATORY OFFERS DIMENSION STONE TESTING

*Orlando, FL –4/6/06* The Tile Council of North America's Product Performance Testing Laboratory expanded its testing services to provide critical information for non-load-bearing and load-bearing applications of dimension stone used in interior or exterior exposures.

The ASTM tests performed by the TCNA laboratory quantify a group of selected physical and mechanical properties of natural stone products that are sized by cutting and grinding to precise dimensions. These tests will:

- 1) Provide values of mechanical properties, such as modulus of rupture and flexural strength (used in overall structural design considerations);
- 2) Confirm adequate compressive strength of stone, which is critical in load-bearing design calculations;
- 3) Determine the applicability of a given stone type from a particular geological vein to building an exterior façade or paving applications wherein the stone's exposure to temperature fluctuations around water's freezing point can cause catastrophic failure to occur; and
- 4) Establish the stone's ability to withstand wear presented by pedestrian traffic or by adverse weather exposure over long periods.

"It is important that our clients have these critical pieces of information in-hand so that proper stone candidates can be considered to ensure trouble-free installations, ultimately yielding satisfied customers," remarked Virgil (Sonny) Irick, TCNA's Director of Laboratory Services.

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The expansion of the TCNA laboratory’s activities into dimension stone testing was a logical and sensible growth strategy based upon decades of experience in testing multiple types of ceramic tiles, adhesives/mortars and grouts. TCNA’s laboratory provides accurate testing to ASTM, ANSI, and ISO standards for materials manufactured and used in tile setting. ASTM standards for dimension stone testing are very similar to those used for ceramic tiles, with the exception that stone test specimens are typically more massive than ceramic tiles. Much of TCNA’s existing ceramic tile test equipment will be used in dimension stone testing.

“Architects, building designers, building contractors and stone masons can feel confident that TCNA will provide to the stone industry the same level of testing expertise that has built an excellent reputation for TCNA’s laboratory in the ceramic tile industry,” continued Dr. Irick.

What makes the TCNA laboratory so unique is the excellent working relationship with Clemson University. The University offers state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and equipment in fields allied to both ceramic tile and dimension stone products; particularly, geology, ceramic engineering and composites engineering, as well as its housing the National Brick Research Center. While the TCNA’s testing laboratory will be adding additional test equipment in the future, the current availability of equipment and expertise in nearby university departments augments the performance of both standard and creative, non-standard testing.

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