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CTDA, TCNA Announce Agency to Certify Porcelain Ceramic Tile USA

Chicago, IL – The Ceramic Tile Distributors Association (CTDA) and the Tile Council of North America (TCNA) will launch the Porcelain Tile Certification Agency (PTCA) to certify porcelain tile.

Porcelain tile is defined as an impervious tile with a water absorption of 0.5% or less as measured by the ASTM C373 test method. There are, however, many instances in which tile not meeting this standard is advertised and sold as porcelain tile. Marketplace confusion, installation problems and even liability concerns result when non-porcelain tile is misrepresented in the marketplace.

In making the joint announcement at Coverings, TCNA Executive Director, Eric Astrachan said, “Under the PTCA certification program, manufacturers who want to prove that their tile is porcelain – meeting the 0.5% water absorption criteria – can have their product tested to determine compliance with that requirement. They may then use the PTCA certification mark on their product packaging, marketing materials, etc., as confirmation of that compliance.”

Industry leaders believe certification is the best solution to continuing concerns over what is and is not porcelain tile. “CTDA and TCNA leaders have worked together for some time, calling on their considerable industry resources, to develop the program which they believe will help mitigate problems that arise when manufacturers produce tile that does not meet the water absorption requirement for porcelain tile but sell it as such,” said CTDA president Doug Miles, Miles Distributors. “Eventually we hope that porcelain certification will be the standard that defines all porcelain tile sold in this country.”

Benefits Throughout the Industry

The program is designed to benefit manufacturers, distributors and end users who are all impacted by the misrepresentation of non-porcelain tile.

Marketplace confusion currently exists over what is and is not porcelain. Producing porcelain tile is a more intensive and costly process. As a result, porcelain tile is often more expensive than other tiles. The lower cost to the consumer of tiles labeled porcelain but with higher than required water absorption characteristics causes confusion in the

marketplace. Porcelain certification will verify the appropriate absorption rate for porcelain tile.

US distributors are responsible for the products they sell and statements they make. If a distributor misrepresents the tile it sells as “porcelain” because it does not clearly meet the US standard for porcelain tile, the distributor could be subject to liability.

The Certification Process

Manufacturers may apply for certification by submitting samples of each tile series to be certified for qualifying tests and by paying the related costs of testing as well as initial and annual certification fees. Recertification of tile at least every three years will be required.

The PTCA will conduct the porcelain certification program, educate the public on the benefits of porcelain certification, conduct research activities, and assist in the development of tests or test methods for porcelain tile. The agency will be managed by a six-member Board of Directors. As founding members, CTDA and TCNA will each appoint one Principal Director and First and Second Alternate Directors.

CTDA is an international association of distributors, manufacturers and allied professionals of ceramic tile and related products. The association’s mission is to provide educational and networking opportunities for distributors of ceramic tile and their suppliers to further the consumption of ceramic tile. CTDA is one of the sponsors of Coverings, the leading North American trade event for ceramic tile, natural stone, flooring and related products. To learn more about CTDA, visit the association’s website at www.ctdahome.org.

TCNA is a trade association representing manufacturers of ceramic tile, tile installation materials, tile equipment, raw materials and other tile-related products. It is recognized for its leadership role in promoting the use of ceramic tile and in developing North American and international industry standards. Additionally, towards the goal of expanding the ceramic tile market in North America, TCNA regularly conducts independent research and product testing, works with regulatory and trade agencies, offers professional training, and publishes installation guidelines, tile standards, economic reports and promotional literature. To learn more about TCNA, please visit the website at www.tileusa.com.

To learn more about PTCA, contact the CTDA or NTCA offices.

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