



Mirror image

United States, Canada should operate with the same quality standards

By Andrew Mayberry

as chairman of the Mirror Division of the Glass Association of North America, I observed the amount of time and resources that went into the development of ASTM International's ASTM C 1503-1 specification for mirrors. Representatives of the flat-glass producers, the chemical and coatings producers, as well as mirror manu-

Canadians pull the plug on outdated requirements

facturers were involved. The standard was in need of updating and clarification. This effort addressed that need most effectively.

Our mirror manufacturing peers in Canada are currently encouraging the acceptance of the same standard. Given the level of cross-border commerce that exists between our two countries, it is logical that we operate with the same quality standards.

Lee Harrison, president of Walker Glass Co., in Montreal, Quebec, and chairman of the GANA's Mirror Division's Canadian Standards Committee, was a prime mover in the effort to develop the new ASTM specification. The Canadian manufacturers are fully aware of and supportive of the new standard. In the

interest of consistency, the Canadian General Standards Board should recognize and begin referencing ASTM C 1503-1 for mirrors.

In mid-July, the CGSB announced the withdrawal of the Canadian National Standard CAN/CGSB 12.5-M86 Mirrors, Silvered. CGSB officials stated that the standard was no longer in compliance with the requirements for a National Standard of Canada as established by the Standards Council of Canada. Requirements for SCC documents are detailed in the publication CAN-P-2 Criteria and Procedures for the Preparation and Approval of National Standards of Canada.

While not specifically stated in the withdrawal notice, the action is likely the result of CGSB's failure to properly maintain the standard. SCC requirements call for a standard to be reviewed and either reaffirmed or revised within five years of publication. The CAN/CGSB 12.5-M86 standard had not been updated since publication in August 1986.


In a press release subsequently published by the Glass Association of North America, Lee Harrison, president of Walker Glass Co., in Montreal, Quebec, and chairman of the GANA's Mirror Division's Canadian Standards Committee, said, "Canadian mirror manufacturers felt the CAN/CGSB 12.5-M86 standard was out-of-date, irrelevant and not well recognized or widely used in industry."

In a November 2003 meeting, Canadian mirror manufacturers discussed funding that would be required for CGSB administrative cost to review and update the standard. Participants in the meeting could not foresee funding being

available for such an effort. "Faced with an outdated standard and prohibitive administrative cost to update the original Canadian document, Canadian mirror manufacturers voted to adopt the recently published ASTM International document C 1503-01 Standard Specification for Silvered Flat Glass Mirrors," Harrison said. "Canadian mirror manufacturers were involved in the development of the ASTM standard and we agreed that adoption of the new standard was the best alternative for consumers, our customers and the mirror industry."

In the United States and Canada, members are distributing information regarding the standard. Canadian mirror manufacturers reference the standard addressing quality requirements for clear and tinted flat-glass mirrors used indoors for mirror glazing and as components of decorative accessories.

In short, members of the Mirror Division of GANA both contributed to and supports the new standard. Information regarding the standard is available at www.mirrorlink.org. To order a copy of the standard, visit ASTM International's www.astm.org or call its headquarters at 610/832-9500.

The GANA Mirror Division's Canadian Standards Committee will continue efforts to educate consumers regarding the adoption of the standard and the many uses of mirrors. The intent of the standard is to clarify mirror quality for all constituents—suppliers, producers, customers and consumers. 

The author is president of Lenoir Mirror Co. in Lenoir, NC.