



WTCA QC WALL PANEL 1.0

Dedicated to Building Quality Panels

WTCA QC WALL PANEL CERTIFICATION FAQ

Listed below are Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the **WTCA QC Wall Panel** Program and **WTCA QC Wall Panel** certification.

1. What is WTCA QC Wall Panel?

The **WTCA QC Wall Panel** program helps manufacturers monitor the quality of wall panels they manufacture and provides the plant with a data management system. The program consists of inspecting wall panels and entering the data into the software program, allowing you to store data and create reports to evaluate the quality of the manufacturing process. The seven inspection criteria include: dimensions, lumber, headers, bucks, placement, nailing pattern, and sheathing.

The data collected from the completed inspections is entered into the **WTCA QC Wall Panel** database, which was created using Microsoft Access™. Storage of the data allows users to evaluate their performance over time in graphs, and to find out more detailed information on performance by crew, panel type, etc.

2. Why was WTCA QC Wall Panel developed?

WTCA developed this program at the request of its members, who wanted a way to monitor the quality of their

wall panel manufacturing process. **WTCA QC Wall Panel** allows users to create detailed charts and reports, so they can get a clear sense for what is happening with their quality. It was WTCA's goal to create a program that was as objective as possible in an effort to eliminate variation between inspectors.

3. What is the intent of the WTCA QC Wall Panel program?

The intent of the program is to provide an objective, quantifiable method of assessing a wall panel manufacturer's level of quality. The inspection criteria, tolerances, form, and process were developed based on the input of a group of wall panel manufacturers.

4. What does "Certification" mean?

"Certification" in **WTCA QC Wall Panel** simply means WTCA confirms that the wall panel manufacturer is using the software and inspection procedures correctly. Certification also indicates that the manufacturer is attaining a minimum level of quality in having a quality control manual,



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meeting the inspection frequency, and checking for specific inspection criteria. WTCA would like to be clear that certification in **WTCA QC Wall Panel** is 100% voluntary and not required by the building code.

5. What are the benefits of being certified?

There are both long- and short-term benefits of being certified in **WTCA QC Wall Panel** which fall into several categories:

MONETARY: It is common for companies using **WTCA QC Wall Panel** to experience cost savings due to reduced repairs and call-backs. A wall panel manufacturer could also see a reduction in insurance premiums.

MARKETING: Through the use of marketing materials made available by WTCA, as well as news releases, etc., wall panel manufacturers can advertise their commitment to quality in their market. Certified companies are also listed on the WTCA website and in Structural Building Components Magazine.

REDUCED LIABILITY EXPOSURE: **WTCA QC Wall Panel** can go a long way in reducing the wall panel manufacturers' exposure to liability.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING: **WTCA QC Wall Panel** allows manufacturers to train their employees on what "quality" really means. By using the program, QC inspectors learn in detail the quality requirements and then are able to train employees on the table. This has proven to be a very effective way to reduce errors and increase quality.

IMPROVED MORALE AMONG EMPLOYEES: It can be frustrating to be told you are doing something wrong and never understand why. We have found that when employees clearly know what is expected of them, they take more pride in their work.

PREPARATION OF FUTURE WTCA PROGRAMS: As our industry evolves technically and we begin to fully use our technological capabilities; manufacturing products with consistent quality will be mandatory. Without this technology, development will be constrained, as engineers will always have to take the conservative approach to design because they have to design to the lowest quality denominator.

EXPECTATION OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF CUSTOMERS: The home building industry expects quality components to arrive at the jobsite. **WTCA QC Wall Panel** provides the quality foundation to meet the demands of our customers now as well as into the future.

INDUSTRY PERCEPTION: It will be increasingly important in the future that we watch over our own quality, so that others do not do it for us, as in the example above. **WTCA QC Wall Panel** is one excellent way to do this and will help improve our industry's reputation with quality as a whole.

6. What are the requirements and steps to becoming certified and maintaining certification?

1. Be a member of WTCA.
2. Purchase **WTCA QC Wall Panel**.
3. Carefully read the **WTCA QC Wall Panel** manual. Also have the inspector meet with the wall panel designer on how to read the wall panel drawing and its different components.
4. Perform inspections at the required weekly inspection frequency and enter the data into the **WTCA QC Wall Panel** database for at least one month.
5. Contact WTCA to enroll in the WTCA QC Wall Panel certification program.

6. Send data file to WTCA for review no sooner than one month after receiving the program. WTCA will review your data and provide insight on how your company can improve in order to meet the certification requirements. For example, we will be looking that you are meeting the inspection frequency, inspecting a representative sample of the wall panels manufactured at your plant, performing detailed inspections, and documenting and repairing any wall panels not meeting the inspection criteria requirements. When data complies WTCA can then certify that company.

Note: WTCA will require a minimum of two data reviews before a plant can be certified. If a plant sends data one month after first starting to use the program and another month after the initial review the soonest the plant can be certified is two months.

7. Sign certification agreement and return to WTCA. After successful certification in the program, you will receive a certificate stating that you are a certified member of **WTCA QC Wall Panel** and in good standing.

7. How long does it take to become certified?

The time to complete the certification process is up to the individual company; WTCA has no maximum time requirement. The minimum possible time would be two months. Most companies take longer, but it all depends upon how quickly the company embraces the **WTCA QC Wall Panel** procedures, how much time is invested in the program, and how much the program is supported by upper management. In WTCA's experience, those companies who commit to using **WTCA QC Wall Panel** and invest the time can become certified in less than six months which includes purchasing the program, learning how to inspect and use the database, and then submitting two months of data to WTCA.

8. What happens if a certified company does not maintain all requirements after certification?

Companies, that after certification, not maintaining the requirements listed in the manual will be placed on probation and/or decertified. If a plant is decertified and decides to pursue certification again they will start with step 6 in the previous section and be required to send in at least two monthly data reviews.

9. What are the costs?

For information regarding software or certification costs, please review the website or contact WTCA. Once the software is purchased, all upgrades will be available at a minimal charge.

10. Who in our plant should do the inspections?

Anyone within the plant can do inspections. It is not necessary that the individual(s) have experience in the manufacturing procedure itself. Someone who has never before seen a wall panel can be trained within one day to understand all inspection procedures.

WTCA does recommend, however, that care be taken in selecting the individual(s). While inspection procedures are not highly technical, they do require the ability to do simple math, read wall panel drawings, and take measurements.

Further, WTCA recommends that the individual(s) doing inspections not be directly supervised by production. This creates a conflict of interest, and WTCA has seen cases of the success of the program being limited due to this factor. WTCA recommends that the inspector(s) be supervised directly by management, engineering, etc.



Do not limit the number of inspectors trained to only one. While certification belongs to a location, it is really the individuals trained who carry the knowledge of the program. We cannot stress enough the importance of having multiple employees trained to perform inspections.

One scenario for an inspector is one who has been injured on the job. QC inspection may allow an early return to work due to its being a low-impact job, yet one that has great value to the company and allows the employee to stay involved with day-to-day company activities until he/she can perform their job again.



11. What about data entry?

If the inspector is not computer savvy then WTCA strongly recommends that wall panel manufacturer has someone on their administrative staff enter the data into the computer using the **WTCA QC Wall Panel** software from the inspection forms. WTCA again recommends that more than one person becomes familiar with using the software.

12. What standard of quality does the WTCA QC Wall Panel Program follow?

Currently there is no standard for the design and manufacturing of wall panels. The inspection criteria, tolerances, form, and process were created based on wall panel manufacturers input. Trusses are based on ANSI/TPI 1, National Design Standard for Metal Plate Connected Wood Truss Construction. This is the wood truss industry's current standard.

WTCA QC Wall Panel Certified Manufacturers are Dedicated to Building Quality.

The WTCA QC Wall Panel program helps manufacturers monitor the quality of wall panels they manufacture and provides the plant with a data management system. The program consists of inspecting wall panels and entering the data into the software program, allowing you to store data and create reports to evaluate the quality of the manufacturing process. This program also offers an official WTCA QC Wall Panel 100% voluntary certification.

If you have any questions that were not addressed above, please let us know.

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