THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER SURFACE PREPARATION AND COATING APPLICATION

Industrial painting has become a highly technical profession involving sophisticated coatings and application techniques, increasing the need for qualified craft workers. But the industrial painting field faces the challenge of an aging workforce whose knowledge and skill can’t be easily replicated. According to the SSPC Workforce Summit, the average painter is now over 50 years old. Not enough new workers are entering the field to compensate for retiring workers or those who elect to move into administrative positions.

This lack of a trained, experienced workforce is a contributing factor in coating failures that lead to huge financial losses. While coating failures can occur for many reasons, they are usually a result of poor surface preparation or application, or inadequate specification, and these are usually the result of poorly trained individuals.

Coating failures result in corrosion. The costs to repair corrosion add up to more than $276 billion a year, according to U.S. Federal Highway Administration research, and those figures have no doubt increased dramatically since the 2001 study.

The costs of failure can include:

• Labor and material costs to re-coat equipment as soon as 1–3 years after construction, instead of the 10–20 years originally intended
• Lost productivity and/or revenue as work spaces are closed for repair
• Injuries or damages due to corrosion-related equipment failures
• Surprise maintenance costs to mitigate corrosion breaches that don’t yet require full replacement

Deficiencies with the variables industrial coating application involves can lead to failure.

These variables include:

• Coatings – Has the manufacturer produced a coating that meets specifications?
• Processes – Are the specs correct? Does the application meet those specs? Has the surface been prepared adequately prior to application?
• Equipment – Are the right tools being used in the application?
• People – Do the applicators have the right experience? Training? Certification? Has the project been inspected by a qualified professional?

THE INDUSTRY’S SOLUTION

In early 2008, SSPC and NACE jointly published SSPC ACS-1/NACE 13, a consensus standard that defines the criteria for programs that certify individual industrial painters to the highest standard of craftsmanship.

During the development of the standard, SSPC was assembling the pieces necessary to implement a comprehensive and robust training curriculum that would meet the requirements of the coming standard. The result of that effort was the Industrial Coating and Lining Application Specialist Qualification and Certification Program, or CAS.

CAS accelerates the process of developing a qualified workforce by addressing the education, training, experience, and knowledge required to prepare surfaces and apply coatings correctly. It is the recognized standard of quality for facility owners concerned with avoiding and mitigating corrosion.

The experience and training requirements of the CAS program are robust, assuring owners and contractors of a very well-qualified workforce.

Since 2008, SSPC has certified 8,000 craftworkers to CAS, making it the largest certification body in the world.

IT WAS GREAT TO REINFORCE THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS LEARNED IN MY TRADE, BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SSPC STANDARDS AND THE WORKERS IN THE FIELD.

— BRANDON B. INDUSTRIAL PAINTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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COATING APPLICATION SPECIALIST (CAS) PROGRAM

The SSPC CAS Certification Program is designed to certify those individual craft workers who have experience and training in all aspects of hands-on surface preparation and coating application of complex industrial and marine structures. This certification program also meets the requirements of ISO 17024. Facility owners, contractors, or certifying agencies may use this program for certification of application specialists for other substrates.

SPRAY APPLICATION (C12) CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

This program assesses the skills of sprayers who have a minimum of 800 hours applying protective coatings with airless/conventional spray in an industrial or marine environment. Candidates are certified through a brief, certification written exam and a practical, hands-on skill assessment. This course is designed to train and certify marine/industrial applicators to operate airless/conventional spray equipment.

ONCE YOU HAVE A C7, CAS, OR C12 CERTIFICATION, SPECIALIZE BY TAKING ADDITIONAL SSPC COURSES.

ABRASIVE BLASTING CERTIFICATION (C7)

ABRASIVE BLASTING CERTIFICATION (C7)

COATING APPLICATION SPECIALIST (CAS)

SPRAY APPLICATION CERTIFICATION (C12)

CONCRETE COATING APPLICATION SPECIALIST (CCAS)

PLURAL COMPONENT APPLICATION FOR POLYUREA & HIGH SOLIDS COATINGS (PLURAL)

SURFACE PREPARATION & PAINT APPLICATION FOR POWER TOOL CLEANING OPERATORS & BRUSH ROLL PAINT APPLICATORS (C6)

THERMAL SPRAY APPLICATOR (THERMAL APP)

WATTERJETTING PROGRAM (C13)

MARINE PLURAL COMPONENT (MPCAC, C14)

ADDITIONAL SSPC SURFACE PREPARATION & COATING APPLICATION CERTIFICATIONS

Concrete Coating Application Specialist (CCAS) Certification Program

Marine Plural Component (MPCAC, C14)

Plural Component Application for Polyurea & High Solids Coatings (PLURAL)

Surface Preparation & Paint Application for Power Tool Cleaning Operators & Brush Roll Paint Applicators (C6)

Thermal Spray Applicator (THERMAL APP)

Watterjetting Program (C13)

Visit www.sspc.org for more information on these courses and see our other course offerings.