PRESS RELEASE

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SPRI HELPS BUILD CONSENSUS FOR NEW CODE LANGUAGE FOR SECURING LIGHTING PROTECTION SYSTEMS ON COMMERCIAL ROOFS

WALTHAM, Mass., November 2022 – The 2024 edition of the International Building Code (IBC), will include new language that clarifies how Lightening Protection Systems (LPS) are secured to commercial roof assemblies, roof coverings, metal edge systems, and gutters. The language, which goes beyond the existing installation standards outlined in NFPA 780 and UL 96A, was developed by SPRI (the Single Ply Roofing Industry), which worked closely with the National Fire Protection Association members, the National Fireproofing Contractors Association, the Lightening Protection Institute, the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, Underwriters Laboratories, the National Roofing Contractors Association, and other stakeholders to build consensus to get the new language approved and adopted for the code in 2024.

The new language, which will be added as new sub-sections in Section 1511 ‘Rooftop Structures,' stipulates that LPS installations must be completed in accordance with the roofing system or edge metal manufacturer’s instructions, or specifications from a qualified design professional. Where LPS components are secured to, or penetrate the roof, they must be properly flashed.

“This is a significant update to the building code,” said Amanda Hickman, president of

The Hickman Group, and SPRI's code consultant. "The current code does not address the impact that LPS attachments have on the roof. Any attachments to the roofing assembly or edge metal system can alter the wind load and performance of these tested components. It is therefore important that the original equipment manufacturer or a qualified design professional provide direction on the attachment methods to be used."

The new language reads as follows:

1511.7 Other rooftop structures. Rooftop structures not regulated by Sections 1511.2 through 1511.6 shall comply with Sections 1511.7.1 through 1511.7.6.2, as applicable.

1511.7.6 Lightning Protection Systems. Lightning protection system components shall be installed in accordance with Sections 1511.7.6.1, 1511.7.6.2, and 2703 of this code.

1511.7.6.1 Installation on metal edge systems or gutters. Lightning protection system components attached to ANSI/SPRI/FM 4435/ES-1 or ANSI/SPRI GT-1 tested metal edge systems or gutters shall be installed with compatible brackets, fasteners, or adhesives, in accordance with the metal edge systems or gutter manufacturer's installation instructions. When metal edge system or gutter manufacturer is unknown, installation shall be as directed by a registered design professional.

1511.7.6.2 Installation on roof coverings. Lightning protection system components directly attached to or through the roof covering shall be installed in accordance with this chapter and the roof covering manufacturer's installation instructions. Flashing shall be installed in accordance with the roof assembly manufacturer's installation instructions and Sections 1503.2 and 1507 where the lightning protection system installation results in a penetration through the roof covering. When the roof covering manufacturer is unknown, installation shall be as directed by a registered design professional.

The 2024 edition of the will be published towards the end of 2023. Once published, the new language for securing LPS on commercial buildings may be adopted by states and jurisdictions across the U.S., and around the world.

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