

AGRSS™

Auto Glass Replacement
Safety Standards Council

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NEWSLETTER

2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference Plans Taking Shape

Planning for the 2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference sponsored by the AGRSS Council is almost complete and the event, formerly called the AGRSS Conference, will provide tons of information about important safety topics. Those attending this year's event can expect the same strong seminar track and quality networking time for which the event has become known.

The two-day conference, scheduled for November 5-6, 2008, at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas, will once again run concurrently—and is co-located with—the International Auto Body Conference (NACE) and is part of Auto Glass Week™.

The seminar line-up includes updates covering various aspects of the AGRSS Standard, including an update on the much-anticipated third-party validation program, to how changes in the automotive industry—such as new car designs or recalls and other safety issues—might affect safe windshield replacements.

Seminars begin on Wednesday,



November 5 at 8 a.m. with the opening and welcome and run through noon on Thursday, followed by an afternoon meeting of the Standards Committee. The cocktail reception and charity auction will take place Wednesday night (*see story Under the Hammer: AGRSS Gearing Up for 2008 Charity Auction for more information*).

Registration for the 2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference sponsored by AGRSS will also get at-

tendees into the separate but co-located Auto Glass Expo @ NACE Trade Show, the AGRSS Charity Auction, the third annual Walt Gorman Memorial Windshield Repair Olympics and fourth annual Auto Glass Technician Olympics, all for free.

Representatives from AGRSS-registered companies can attend the conference for \$150 if they register before October 17, 2008 and representatives from non-AGRSS registered companies have the same deadline for registration at a rate of \$250. After the October 17 deadline, the registration fees increase to \$250 and \$350 respectively.

Information is available on the AGRSS website. ❖

AGRSS Validation Information Webinar

September 19, 2008

Sponsored by Guardian Industries

Watch for more information!

Ketcherside Reacts to Belron US Statements About AGRSS

In May, Belron US executive vice president Tom Feeney made statements at the Independent Glass Association's (IGA) Annual Conference in Las Vegas regarding the company's views of AGRSS and to what degree it supports the efforts of the AGRSS Council, and those comments may have come to your attention.

Shortly thereafter, company spokesperson Jenny Cain issued a statement clarifying Feeney's statements. The official company statement did little to quell the concerns of many industry representatives, including AGRSS Council Inc. president Cindy Ketcherside, who have expressed concern about statements.

When asked during a presentation about his position on AGRSS, Feeney advised Belron US representatives don't intend to register the company's shops because they don't support third-party validation. In the follow-up

statement, Cain advised the news organization glassBYTEs.com[™]/**AGRR** magazine that company officials believe that its own training and certification program, SafeTech, "takes the [AGRSS] Standard as adopted to a higher level."

In her response to the statements, Ketcherside indicated there seems to be confusion about the actual content of the Standard and what it addresses.

"The comment Tom Feeney made at the AGRSS Conference, as well as the subsequent statement issued by Belron/US, lead me to believe there is tremendous confusion within the Belron US organization of the actual document ANSI/AGRSS 002-2002, the industry's Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standard and the AGRSS-registered company program," she said.

The matter of Belron US and its participation in the development of the Standard and the current, apparent confusion raised a concern for Ketcherside as well.

"The disturbing part of these

statements is that AGRSS is, and has always been, a full industry-wide effort, including individuals from the Belron US organization who helped write the Standard and develop Phase I and Phase II of the AGRSS-registered company program," Ketcherside added. "It belongs to our industry as a whole, without partisanship or politics. It was developed to help advance our industry in auto glass installation that complies with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards."

Ketcherside said she hopes that Belron US will remain a part of the effort—and perhaps even become a registered company in the future.

"As the largest provider of auto glass services in this country, we would like Belron to be part of the effort to create a healthy industry," she said. "Having Belron US embrace, rather than discount, AGRSS registration would be one of the strongest and most effective leadership statements the company could make in the United States." ❖

Annual AGRSS Conference Undergoes Name Change; Will be Known as the International Auto Glass Safety Conference

The only industry event dedicated exclusively to the safe and proper replacement of auto glass is undergoing a name change. The Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standard Council (the AGRSS Council) has announced that its annual conference will henceforth be known as the International Auto Glass Safety Conference

The event, which is held as part of Auto Glass Week[™] in Las Vegas this November, features two days of seminars and educational programs that focus on the best ways to insure the safety of all vehicle occupants. It is open to any one with an interest in auto glass safety.

"The new name better reflects what the conference is about—auto glass safety," said marketing chairperson Debra Levy. "We had also heard from some people who had wanted to attend but thought the 'AGRSS Conference' was just for AGRSS-registered companies. All are welcome and the new name reflects that.

On the Auction Block:

ENTICING ITEMS DONATED FOR 2008 CHARITY AUCTION

Three months to go until the 2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference sponsored by AGRSS and all eyes are on the Charity Auction scheduled to be held at the Welcoming Cocktail Party. This year's auction is expected to top last year's bounty as the bidding has been opened to everyone attending Auto Glass Week in Las Vegas and the list of items on the table include two weeks at a secluded lakeside cabin in New York.

Jean Pero

Auction chair Jean Pero is still accepting donations for the fundraiser, which will take place on the evening of Wednesday, November 5, 2008. If you've got a special service to offer, a special pastime—or vacation place—you'd like to share or have rare, unique or one-of-a-kind items others might clamor for and want to help support the AGRSS Council efforts, contact Jean Pero via telephone at 303/475-7302 or e-mail jeanmygrantglass@comcast.net.

Last year's auction was a first for AGRSS and the event was considered wildly successful. Prizes included two tickets to the 2008 Tostitos Fiesta Bowl Football Classic, an 8-gb iPod Touch, Panasonic Lumix Digital Camera DMC-F3S and an iPhone, among other things.

Money raised at the charity auction goes to help increase awareness of safe auto glass installations. ❖

PROSTARS® Leadership Council Endorses AGRSS™ Standard for PROSTARS Participant Glass Shop Retailers

PITTSBURGH, May 14, 2008 – PROSTARS, a nationwide alliance of independent glass shop retailers, moved closer to accomplishing one of its strategic initiatives for 2008 earlier this year. On May 2, 2008, a letter from the PROSTARS Leadership Council went out to the entire PROSTARS retail auto glass participant base endorsing AGRSS™ (Automotive Glass Replacement Safety Standard) and recommending registration for all of its PROSTARS participants.

PROSTARS Leadership Council member Nik Frye, vice president of sales and marketing for Glass America, said he believes the AGRSS Standard has become the "gold standard of the industry."

"Registration and compliance with the AGRSS Standard shows an auto glass re-

tailer's commitment to providing safe installations. It offers consumers the confidence that their auto glass replacement is of the highest quality and safety when it is done by an AGRSS registered company," said Frye.

"The support of the AGRSS Standard by PROSTARS participants adds their names to a growing list of important Auto Glass and Insurance Industry endorsements that AGRSS has recently received," he added.

In a recent survey, PROSTARS Leadership Council members were in overwhelming support of establishing the AGRSS Standard among PROSTARS retailers and also strongly supported an initiative that would assist PROSTARS member retailers in becoming AGRSS registered.

"We welcome the Council's endorsement of the AGRSS Standard," said Jim Richardson, director of glass alliance programs for PPG. "As leaders in the industry, our leadership council's endorsement of this initiative will further our efforts to differentiate PROSTARS participants within the retail auto glass marketplace. The windshield and its proper replacement play a critical role in the structural integrity of the vehicle. AGRSS-registered auto glass retailers can offer consumers the assurance that they are receiving a quality service from a trained and qualified service technician."

For more information on the PROSTARS program, visit www.ppg-prostars.com. ❖

Third-Party Validation - Phase III: Are You Ready?

With Phase III of AGRSS' third-party validation program still on schedule to go into effect in 2009, AGRSS-registered shops only have about six months left to prepare for the next phase of the registration.

AGRSS Accreditation chair Carl Tompkins is stressing the importance of using the remaining months of

2008 to prepare for what's next. He reports that the most frequent thing he hears from shop owners is an acknowledgement of the progress being made with the third phase and a building excitement about it—along with some trepidation about how well their own companies will move through the process when the time comes.

"My advice to the interested parties is to really understand that the time is right—right now, this last half of the year—to be testing your organization under the Phase II concept of registration. To practice, to prove to yourself without exception that your people, that your business processes, your locations, are all compliant,"

Tompkins said. "I'm spending a lot of time counseling people ... to run what I call a mock validation on the company. To prove that each of the 49 questions under Attachment B can be answered the same way by everyone in [your] organization."

Tompkins stressed that he wanted members of the industry to understand that the accreditation committee had the help of professional auditors when writing Attachment B.

"I say that because it's an extremely credible tool in preparation for Phase III. Those 49 questions need to be answered 'yes.'"

Six months is all shop owners have left to prepare themselves and staffers to be able to answer "yes" to

ADDITIONAL UPDATES:

Carl Tompkins, chair of the AGRSS accreditation committee, reports that while the hiring of the third-party validation company has just cleared its first hurdle, the subcommittees continue to make considerable progress with the projects they have had.

Among the accomplishments:

1. A draft form approval of the following documents and tools to be provided as an option of support to the third-party validation company that is hired for Phase III of the validation process:

- A glossary of terms;
- An AGRSS validator reference training guide; and
- An AGRSS validator training outline

2. The marketing team is in the process of delivering several new items to the industry, all part of the committee's annual marketing and communications effort in and under the efforts of the accreditation committee (for more information, see article *Get the Word Out: AGRSS Marketing Packets Hit the Mail*):

- A new validation brochure, defining how the phase III validation is to be conducted;
- An invitation for a webinar for AGRSS-registered companies that will be held on September 19;
- A stopwatch invitation to the industry with the progress of the validation; and
- A new CAP info card.

3. Overall, the committee has also reached a final approval form of the AGRSS code of ethics, our AGRSS complaint resolution board, and complaint resolution process, all aimed at helping companies if they have questions about AGRSS registration, validation, tough questions answered and where complaints can be heard and resolved in a positive, professional manner.

4. Tompkins also reports that the AGRSS Board of Directors has approved the research and hiring of a professional Consumer Awareness Program (CAP) administrator. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were sent out in May to any and all

interested parties who want to be considered for the contracted position of CAP administrator. The board of directors has concluded that CAP is an extremely valuable activity of AGRSS and is willing to take whatever measures implemented to make sure CAP grows in number and effect each year.

The AGRSS board of directors will be reviewing any and all proposals that come in, stemming from the RFPs, and making a decision before the end of summer as to who that administrator will be. The CAP administrator will be retained on an annual contract basis.

"We feel this to be a very necessary step to advance the cause of CAP to the next level, and one we are very excited about taking. We anticipate that our next CAP event will be conducted in the Seattle area by the end of September, with a number of interested AGRSS registered companies already showing interest to be involved based on the great success we had last year in Rochester, Minn.," Tompkins said.



Hit the Mail

validation and the forthcoming International Auto Glass Safety Conference. The forthcoming validation packet will include information about the forthcoming validation and why third-party validation is paramount to the success of the AGRSS organization. Also in the forthcoming validation packets, recipients will receive information about the forthcoming validation, a dedicated page of Frequently Asked Questions—or FAQs—(see attached), a reminder postcard promoting the Consumer Awareness Program and encouraging companies to get involved with them, as well as information about the 2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference sponsored by the AGRSS Council.

Around the same time AGRSS-registered companies start receiving their information packet, industry suppliers will also be getting information packages tailored to meet their needs as suppliers. Not only will there be facts about the upcoming validation and what it means for the suppliers but they, too, will receive FAQ sheets and information about the role suppliers can play in CAP events

and the 2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference sponsored by the AGRSS Council.

In the final wave of the media blitz for this summer, information packets will blanket the consumer press. Along with information similar to what the AGRSS-registered shops and suppliers will receive, members of the general press are also being invited to a webinar (web-based seminar) that will break down the AGRSS Standard, the work of the AGRSS Council and the importance of AGRSS-registered shops in a way they can understand and relate to their readers. The webinar, sponsored by Guardian Industries, will take place September 19. ❖

Dr. Chip Interview: A “Clearview” on Why AGRSS Promotion is So Important

Gerald “Jerry” Zwart, also known as “Dr. Chip,” isn’t all work and no play. When he isn’t overseeing operations at Clearview Windshield Repair—his successful windshield repair business headquartered in Inwood, Iowa, which has won local honors as the

“It’s about the industry. What can I, and Clearview Windshields, do to improve the industry? ... If anyone and everyone in the industry had that passion, to do it not for themselves but for the industry, the numbers would go up dramatically and much more quickly.”

best in the area three years running—he’s out pounding the pavement to bring AGRSS awareness to the auto glass industry in his area and then some.

In addition to an informational meeting earlier this year where AGRSS accreditation chairperson Carl Tompkins was the guest speaker, Zwart also has arranged another meeting for July 24.

“We’re ... going to be talking to some of the new members of the Iowa (Independent Glass Association (IGA)) chapter about AGRSS to see if we can get them signed up,” he said.

Zwart is also hoping to have another Iowa IGA event this fall before the 2008 International Auto Glass Safety Conference; if things go as planned it is his intention to have every person in Iowa who works on auto glass in any capacity attend the event.

“Around my neck of the woods, a lot of body shops work on glass and I think they need to be registered, too. I think it’s something they need to talk about,” he explained.

And driving his desire to get industry people talking about the AGRSS Standard is his own personal belief that it’s the right thing to do.

“It’s all about keeping the customer safe. We need to get the word out there. Keeping the customer safe, you know? It’s something the industry needs to do. It’s a passion I have for the industry—to do it right and for everyone to do it right,” Zwart said. “To know what it’s about is to protect yourself; to do it correctly and prevent liability lawsuits. I’d like to see my fellow auto glass shops, installers—whomever—protect themselves and ultimately

protect their consumers.”

Though he’s the catalyst for many of the AGRSS-related events being held in Iowa of late, Zwart credits others in the industry with making it all happen.

“In the state of Iowa, we’re real grateful for the auto glass suppliers [and] adhesive suppliers. They help get the word out. I’m going to try to see if I can get the names of some body shop suppliers to get them to help us get the word out,” he said.

He’s even tried to take it directly to the insurance companies, with mixed results.

Last year, after the annual auto glass installers’ class hosted by the Iowa State IGA chapter, Zwart and Tompkins made the rounds of some local insurance agents in the greater Des Moines area to introduce the AGRSS Standard and discuss what it means to the industry.

“One [agent] said, ‘You’re in the wrong place, you need to go to corporate in Columbus.’ One said ‘this is good information,’ but it wasn’t quite the ‘wow, this is really good stuff’ response,” he said.

Yet he remains optimistic.

“You never know when you plant a seed when it will grow,” he added.

Ultimately, Zwart’s push to bring AGRSS awareness to the rest of the industry as well as the public is all about giving back.

“It’s about the industry. What can I, and Clearview Windshields, do to improve the industry? That’s what it’s about. If anyone and everyone in the industry had that passion, to do it not for themselves but for the industry, the numbers would go up dramatically— and much more quickly,” he said. ❖

Myths Busted: The Truth Behind AGRSS, How it Works and What it Does

Misconception is everywhere. From the online forums, to conversations between members of the auto glass industry, people think—and worse yet, assume—that the AGRSS Standard means certain things and, by extension, that the AGRSS Council has certain powers, abilities or responsibilities. Sometimes people are pretty close to accurate; other times, they're completely wrong—but at least they're talking about it, right? Well, yes, but everyone is better off when the information being shared, spared or speculated is accurate.

REALITY CHECK

What's real and what's not? Let's take a look at some of the most frequently overheard misconceptions about AGRSS and find out what's really happening.

MYTH #1: A TECHNICIAN OR COMPANY CAN BE AGRSS-CERTIFIED.

Reality: The reality is that no one is AGRSS-certified. AGRSS does not certify. A *COMPANY* can become AGRSS-registered, but the AGRSS Council does not issue certifications. Registration is company-wide; it is not an individual designation. AGRSS registration reflects support for the Standard, the Council and the goals thereof as well as a pledge to complete auto glass replacements according to the AGRSS Standard.

MYTH #2: ONE PERSON, COMPANY OR ENTITY "OWNS" THE AGRSS COUNCIL.

Reality: The truth is that no one owns AGRSS. AGRSS is a not-for-profit corporation. It was created by a group of the auto glass industry leaders with the goal of creating a standard for proper installation that would put consumer safety—and by extension, professionalism—as the

defining attributes of the auto glass industry. The founders of AGRSS purposely included many members of the industry with varied backgrounds and from different sized companies with the intention of representing the needs of all aspects of the industry.

MYTH #3: THE LARGER THE COMPANY (OR THE BIGGER THE MONETARY DONATION), THE GREATER THE "PRESENCE" IT HAS ON THE AGRSS COUNCIL/BOARD OF DIRECTORS/AND THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE.

Reality: The truth is there are nine members of the Board of Directors of the AGRSS Council Inc., and the people who fill those positions are elected by the 52-member AGRSS Standards Committee. Every Director is a volunteer, including the seven committee chairs. There is a one-person, one-vote rule on both the Standards Committee and the Board of Directors. Individuals, not companies, are elected to both the Board and Committee. No company can have more than one Board or Committee member. However, each representative is afforded one vote when decisions are made and the majority rules, no matter who votes which way.

MYTH #4: AGRSS IS OUT TO MAKE MONEY.

Reality: AGRSS is a non-profit organization. Any money the AGRSS Council raises—from the charity auction at the International Auto Glass Safety Conference sponsored by AGRSS, to registration fees and donations—goes to further the cause of the AGRSS Council. Some examples of how AGRSS money is spent include attaining high-profile speakers such as Ralph Nader and Byron

Bloch for the Conference. Both Nader and Bloch, once they became familiar with AGRSS and the goals set by the Council, have become powerful allies in championing the cause on a national level. On a smaller scale, the revenue generated by the Council also goes to marketing materials—the initial start-up costs of printing the brochures and having the patches, plaques, decals and pins made (all of which are sold to members at cost plus shipping and handling), creating and distributing marketing information to public sources, developing and printing media kits for member use—and maintenance of the Standard itself, just to name a few things.

MYTH #5: AGRSS SHOULD/CAN/WILL POLICE THE WHOLE AGRR INDUSTRY.

Reality: AGRSS was not created to police the AGRR industry and it does not, and cannot, do so. The truth is if it were possible for a group to police the entire auto glass industry, it probably would have been done well before AGRSS. The AGRSS Council counts on its registered companies—and others in the industry—to be its eyes and ears, to help identify shop owners that are claiming to be AGRSS-registered when they are not. At that point, the AGRSS staff will ask the offending shop to either become registered immediately or discontinue using language or images that imply they are. If it can be proved that a registered-shop is not performing replacements according to the AGRSS Standard, the AGRSS Council can revoke the shop's registration. You may never know it's happened, but rest assured, it does. ❖

Mark Your Calendars



... for the fourth annual International Auto Glass Safety Conference

Nov. 5-6, 2008
Mandalay Bay
Convention Center
in Las Vegas, Nev.

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