

INDUSTRYNEWS

Z26.1 Moves Forward Despite Industry Protests

NWRA has learned that the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) has adopted its Z26.1 standard and pushed it through to ANSI for final approval. They are expecting to have the standard published in early 2009. NWRA's requests for a copy of the revised standard have been denied.

"The SAE Glazing Materials Committee has approved the changes to the ANSI Z26.1 standard. The document has been revised accordingly... we are hopeful that the revised Z26.1 will be issued early 2009," stated Micheline Brussow Standards Specialist for SAE International.

"This information is very troubling," commented Patrick Smith, NWRA director of operations. "To our knowledge no person or organization that forwarded comments on the public release of the revised Z26.1 standard has received an answer to their comments."

"If SAE does not properly follow ANSI guidelines for standards approval which requires a public comment period where those comments are addressed and ANSI approves the changes to Z26.1 then it calls into question the validity of the new standard and the ANSI standards making process," continued Smith.

NWRA believes that this draft, as was originally written, will greatly change the way repairers do business should it become an ANSI approved standard. The offending section specifies that anyone other than the original glazing manufacturer be required to catalog work done on automotive glass by etching the glass surface. The requirement includes everyone who works on windshields in any way, on any level.

Upon learning of reports that the revisions to the Z26 Standard contained language that would be detrimental to the windshield repair industry the summer of 2007, NWRA began a bid to access the new language proposed for the Standard

as well as to be involved with the revision process. ANSI procedures require that any comments about the proposed draft Standard be provided to SAE.

NWRA will continue to issue updates concerning Z26 as events merit.

ASSOCIATIONNEWS

New Board and Officers Elected for 2009

Wade Schlichenmayer, account executive and lead trainer at Delta Kits Inc. in Eugene, Ore.; Paul Syfko of Glass Medic America in Westerville, Oh; and Jeff Wurst, owner of Crackmaster Windshield Repair in Redding, Calif. have been elected by the NWRA membership to serve as the association's new board members.

Schlichenmayer, who also represents his company on the ROLAGS committee, is an NWRA certified technician and sits on the NWRA Certification Committee.

Wurst has been in the repair industry for 15 years and operates a repair-only company. A licensed UltraBond technician and NWRA certified technician, the native Californian served in the U.S. Navy, graduated from Shasta College near his hometown of Redding, and attended the Wyoming Technical Institute for the auto body and paint trade. ASE-certified for body, fender and paint, Wurst owned and operated a body shop and restoration business in Wyoming for a short time before returning to California.

Schlichenmayer and Wurst are running for positions most recently filled by Paul Gross of Harmon Solutions Group, and David Erwin of Safelite Auto Glass.

Paul Syfko has just completed his second term as association president, and has been nominated to retain the position of past president serving on the board of directors.

Mike Boyle, president of GlasWeld Inc. in Bend, Ore., was elected president of the board during the new board's first meeting the first week of January. Boyle was elected to the board in 2008 and had served in that capacity in the past.

Boyle was elected unanimously as were two other association officers. Kerry Wanstrath, president of Glass Technology in Durango, Colo., was re-elected NWRA vice president, a position he has held since 2008.

Schlichenmayer was elected by the board to serve as NWRA treasurer.



Mike Boyle



Paul Syfko



Wade Schlichenmayer

NWRA Annual Conference Tackles Insurance Questions, Certification Training

The National Windshield Repair Association's (NWRA) annual conference wrapped up on November 7, 2008, with high praise from attendees. The event was co-located with the International Autobody Congress and Exposition (NACE) and contained two days of educational events, repair competitions, certification testing and a reception at Mandalay Bay Convention Center.

"I would have to say the certification seminar presented quite a lot of useful information pertaining to the guidelines our industry is establishing for fieldwork," said attendee Eileen Smith of STAR Windshield Repair in Cedar Park, Texas.

"It is important to have parameters for the work we do in order to present a uniform, cohesive front in the windshield repair community nationwide."

One of the most attended seminars was a question and answer session with representatives of the claims administration and insurance industries. Chris Umble, LYNX Services' vice president of strategic initiatives, joined State Farm's national glass manager Bob Bischoff and manager of glass claims services Maura Crittendon for the session, but Bischoff was quick to note that the panel really was not an inclusive "insurance panel."

"I'd like to see some other insurers here," he said. "I think they're missing an opportunity."

The panel focused both on how the insurers view the concept of "green"—a concept the NWRA has focused on with the development of its green initiative—and how they view repair in general.

Umble noted that "green" initiatives and environmental friendliness are important, as is efficiency—and that they all go hand-in-hand.

"We've done an awful lot to automate the industry," Umble said. "Did we set out to do this because it was green or because it was efficient? Well, honestly, because it was efficient."

As for maximizing the use of the



Incoming NWRA board member Wade Schlichenmayer of Delta Kits observed the practical portion of NWRA member Ross Lovatus's, of Rawlins Glass, technician certification.

repair option, Umble said that LYNX does much training with its customer service representatives to teach them to teach the consumer that repair is an environmentally sound practice.

Just like LYNX, State Farm also has worked at minimizing paper in a bid to be both efficient and green, Crittendon said.

"We've done a very good job of reducing paper through electronic options," she said. The company also encourages carpooling among its employees, and offers a shuttle service between its facilities in Bloomington, Ill., where it is headquartered.

Once the green part of the session was complete, the real work began: Bischoff attempted to dispel myths that the company "has gotten out of the repair business."

"We do pay for repairs," he said. "We

do the exact same thing on the repair side that we do on the replacement side."

In the past, the company had waived deductibles for repairs; i.e., even though typically a repair costs much less than a deductible, the company would pay for the service in full. State Farm has ceased this practice in most areas, except for those in which deductibles for auto glass repair are waived by law.

"It was never our intention to waive deductibles forever," Bischoff said.

When asked if State Farm is likely to ever require NWRA certification of shops, Bischoff stressed that consumer choice will always be important to the company—and he believes this should be an industry effort, not one an insurance company should impose on the industry, if it's imposed at all.

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“Policyholders choose what glass shops they want to go to. We look to your industry to really drive [certification requirements],” he said, adding that “If a customer says I want to go to Joe’s Auto Glass, we’re not going to tell him he can’t.”

Bischoff also reminded attendees that the company’s number-one concern will always be the well-being of its policyholders, with whom it has contracts.

“When a question like this comes up, I have to think, ‘how would the State Farm policyholder benefit?’” he asked.

Bischoff also spoke to the popular topic of fuel surcharges—noting that the company has never broken down its payments (through its Offer and Acceptance program) before by part, service, etc., and paying specifically for fuel surcharges would go against this policy.

“We’re not going to pay for that right now,” he said. “The offer we make is fair and competitive.”

Following the insurance presentation was an update on the latest automotive trends by Solutia Inc.’s Mark Gold, and an NWRA certification training session by Delta Kits’ Wade Schlichenmayer.

Gold discussed trends to watch for in the near future including laminated sidelites, tinted glass, etc. Of the many updates he provided, one was about the new, special windshield designed by PPG for the Chrysler 300, based on nanotechnology.

Of course, the popular question among attendees was: “what’s that going do to our work?”

“My sense is that any glass with a high-performance coating will not repair the same way as another piece of glass,” noted one attendee.

“I wouldn’t lose any sleep over this,” said Gold. “This is a very high-priced vehicle, and it’s not likely you’re going to see it.”

After Gold’s presentation, approximately 15 technicians participated in the hour-long certification course provided by Schlichenmayer and followed by the exam. On Saturday morning, several technicians also completed their practical assessments with administrators Delta Kits and AEGIS tools.

NWRA Members Win Silver and Bronze at Repair Olympics

Brian Fenner of NWRA member Safe Glass

Technologies took second place in his first attempt at the Walt Gorman Memorial Windshield Repair Olympics, held on November 6, 2008, at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas. Now in its third year, the competition is co-located with the International Auto Body Conference and Expo (NACE) as part of Auto Glass Week @ NACE. It is co-sponsored by the National Windshield Repair

Association and **AGRR** magazine. Also competing for the first time

John Ciotti of NWRA member Cindy Rowe Auto Glass took third.

Matt Anderson of Novus in Spokane Valley, Wash., became the first repeat winner of the Walt Gorman Memorial Windshield Repair Olympics. For the second year in the row, Anderson, 41, walked away the winner of the competition after successfully completing repairs on the windshield of a Mazda 6 to the ROLAGS Standard.

“It feels great. I’m very glad it’s over. Competition is always a little stressful. I couldn’t be happier about having a good result. That’s what it’s all about,” Anderson said in an interview with AGRR magazine’s online news source glassBYTES.com™.

The judges for the 2008 WRO were all NWRA members. Jay Birkford represented NWRA member NOVUS Glass, Lucien Boulanger represented NWRA member A-1 Windshield Doctor (A-1 is the company founded by Walt Gorman), and out-going NWRA board member Paul Gross of Harmon Solutions also served as a judge.



Brian Fenner of Safe Glass Technologies (left) and John Ciotti flank WRO winner Matt Anderson.



Brian Fenner (above) is shown competing against Matt Anderson in the WRO finals.





NOVUS Celebrates 500th Training Class Milestone

NOVUS Glass held its 500 NOVUS Windshield Repair training class the week of November 10 - 15, 2008.

The initial NOVUS windshield repair training classes were held over a period of three days and consisted of classroom presentations on the techniques and technology of windshield repair, as well as on the marketing and sales techniques needed to get a new NOVUS windshield repair business off the ground.

The current NOVUS Franchise training course is approximately one month long and includes five and a half days of technical windshield repair and business operations training at our company headquarters in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota, two weeks of hands-on auto glass replacement training in one of our three NOVUS regional training centers, plus an addition week of one-on-one field training focused on further sharpening the new franchisees sales, marketing and operational skills.

Welcome New and Returning Members

Auto One Brighton, MI
 Blue Water Katy, TX
 Excel Auto Glass Corp. Lake Katrine, NY
 LatiR B.V. 1620 HC HOORN, Netherlands
 MJD Windshield Repair Poughkeepsie, NY
 Nu-Shield Windshield Repair Atwater, CA
 Rapid Glass Company, A Minneapolis, MN
 Rock Star Windshield Repair
 Star Technology Windshield Repair. Des Plaines, IL
 SuperGlass Windshield Repair #236 Los Angeles, CA
 TLC Restoration Putney, VT
 Tri Glass Monroe, WA
 Windshield Doctor, The Jamestown, ND





The Cheap Fix

by Gayle Good, NWRA Technical Director

The concept of do-it-yourself car repair is an old one. Whether it is changing your own oil or spending the summer stripping rust off of your passenger door, most simple automotive repairs can still be done by brave weekend worriers. We have all seen the breaks fixed with do-it-yourself kits. Most of these home remedies end up in a glass shop for repair with an added expense for cleaning out unnatural contaminants or the added cost of a complete replacement for the customer.

In today's economic climate it feels like everyone is looking for a way to pinch pennies. If something is broken, they try to fix it themselves to save a few bucks. Windshield repair has always been an affordable alternative to a replacement, but these days it has also been targeted by the penny-pinchers. An increasing number of customers are trying do-it-yourself repair kits rather than paying a professional. These kits are adding to the do-it-yourself tactics technicians usually see—such as nail polish, super glue and anything else the customer thinks will seal a break. Depending on the brand of kit used and the type of damage customers are not getting the bargain they were hoping for.

Cheap consumer repair kits can be bought at any auto parts or big box store. I bought a do-it-yourself repair kit from AutoZone for \$8 in order to conduct research for this column. This product has a video on its website that shows the complete process step-by-step. The video actually has more information than the written instructions, which I found strange.

The process can take 45 minutes to 90 minutes depending on weather. The web-video recommends the customer place their vehicle in the shade and then move it into the sun when they are ready to perform the repair. Interestingly enough, the written instructions do not tell the customer to follow these steps; this means if



the customer does the repair in full sun it will set before they are finished.

The product's suggested temperature range is between 50 and 75 degrees. This is the best temperature for any repair but mean this do-it-yourself kit may have problems in cold weather.

The directions never tell the customer to check if the break is filled. You are supposed to assume it is once all the steps are completed. Weather is also never mentioned and the product does not take into account if the glass is too hot or too cold aside from the online videos suggestion of shading the windshield. The product definitely does not address the problem of water or other contaminants being present in the break. Fortunately the break I repaired benefited from the fact that it was undemanding and void of contaminants.

For a repair technician the problem with these kits is damage that artificially limits access to the break and adds unnatural contamination. Repairs made by these kits will contain contamination from products the technician may have never seen before. The resins used with these store bought kits can barely be called resins; they have a very limited lifetime and are rarely worth injecting into a break. Depending on how much of the manufacturer's substance has entered the break; it may not be repairable at all. Too much blockage will prevent you from gaining clean access to a break and you have no other option than to replace the glass.

Fortunately, sometimes the manufac-

turer's substance only seeps into the break and seals it. In these cases the technician can drill past the barrier and pop open the break. The technician can then attempt to refill the break properly. Due to the break's exposure to a non-professional grade resin, there is still a contamination issue that may affect the bonding of the resin to the glass. The technician will have to handle that issue on merits.

Due to the honest good intentions of the customer, you should always prepare the customer properly for the realistic outcome of a repair. A repair may have been made more difficult due to their do-it-yourself repair kit. You also need to educate customers about the benefit of your shop and the industry. Instead of saving a buck or two, customers should consider spending their money wisely. A professional repair is always the best investment.

Additionally, smart repair shop owners will go back to the store were an over-the-counter kit was purchased to have an honest discussion with the store's manager or owner. You may be able to get that automotive parts shop to refer customers to you instead of selling a frugal weekend warrior a product that will cost them money in the long run.

Gayle Good is technical director for the NWRA and an NWRA-certified technician. She has been employed at Cindy Rowe Auto Glass for 17 years. All thoughts expressed here are Good's and do not necessarily reflect those of the NWRA.



Special thanks from the National Windshield Repair Association



**David Taylor,
Cindy Rowe
Auto Glass
Co-founder, Past
President and
Board Member
1994-2008**



**Paul Gross,
Harmon Solutions
Corp. Co-founder,
Board Member
1995-2008**



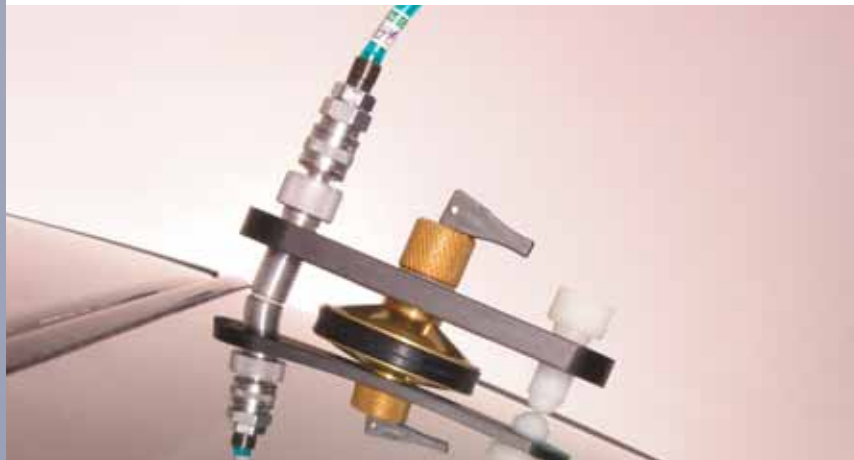
**Dave Erwin,
Safelite Auto Glass
Board Member
2005-2008**



The NWRA would like to thank Mr. Paul Gross, Mr. David Erwin and Mr. David Taylor for their years of voluntary service as directors on the board of the NWRA, their contributions to the repair industry and their work for the benefit of the entire glass repair industry.

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