

14th Edition NPCA Quality Control Manual for Precast Concrete Plants

Clarification of Changes – February 1, 2019

The NPCA Quality Assurance Committee met via conference call on Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019, to discuss the comments from NPCA members received during the 60-day comment period, from Nov. 1, 2018, through Dec. 31, 2018. Committee members agreed unanimously that clarification was needed in five major areas of the manual and that a clarification document be posted on the Certification page of the NPCA website.

Clarification was requested on the following changes:

- Changes to plant inspection scoring;
- Continuous Improvement – Section 1.1.4 in Chapter 1 & Section 2.5 of the Plant Terms & Conditions;
- Use of the Producer Portal under Continuous Improvement;
- Section 5.3.5.4 Standard has been revised and the Commentary removed; and
- NPCA Product Listing Program

Changes to Plant Inspection Scoring

For program year 2019, the highest plant inspection score is 92 unless the plant chooses to participate in Section 1.1.4 Continuous Improvement. No additional scoring changes have been made to the program. Plants must obtain an overall score above 75 to avoid failing their inspection. In addition, plants scoring less than 80 and greater than 75 overall will earn probationary status. Plants must also score 75 or greater in all critical sections to avoid probationary status.

Continuous Improvement – Section 1.1.4

In order to be considered for Continuous Improvement points, the plant shall first choose to participate in Continuous Improvement, Section 1.1.4 to earn addition points beyond 92. To participate, the plant must choose a minimum of two out of three initial categories earning one point each. The three choices are (1) Active participation in the Producer Portal, (2) Perform semi-annual self-audits using the self-audit tool available in the Producer Portal, and (3) educate plant staff beyond the requirements for plant QC personnel.

Successful completion of two of the three categories will earn the plant two additional points, making a maximum possible score of 94. Plants can earn up to six additional points by providing objective evidence to the auditor during the plant inspection that continuous improvement activities are in place and/or have taken place at the plant in one or more of four areas. The four areas are (1) Production, (2) Processes, (3) Facilities, and (4) Operational. Successful completion of six activities annually will earn the plant up to an additional six points, making the maximum possible score of 100. For additional details on Continuous Improvement, please refer to Section 1.1.4 in Chapter 1, and Section 2.5 of the Plant Terms and Conditions of the NPCA Quality Control Manual for Precast Concrete Plants.

Use of the Producer Portal under Continuous Improvement

Use of the NPCA Producer Portal is not a mandatory requirement to participate in Section 1.1.4 Continuous Improvement. Use of the Producer Portal is one of the three choices plants can make to be considered for Continuous Improvement activity points as noted above. If a plant chooses to use the portal as one of its two categories then the plant shall abide by the details provided in Section 2.5 of the Plant Terms and Conditions for Continuous Improvement.

Removal of the Commentary under Section 5.3.5.4

The Standard under this section has been revised to clarify the 28-day compressive strength testing requirements and the Commentary portion was removed from the manual.

NPCA Product Listing Program

NPCA has taken certification to the next level with a new product-focused certification for water and wastewater tanks. NPCA's Plant Certification program has traditionally been process-based, certifying the processes that plants must conform to in manufacturing precast concrete products. The new Optional Product Listing for Water and Wastewater Tanks Program describes specific product models and the design and performance criteria they must meet to obtain certification and listing. NPCA programs use independent third-party engineering firms accredited to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for plant inspection. Both the plant certification program and the product-specific certification program are accredited by ANSI.

All NPCA Certified Plants are eligible to participate by completing a detailed submittal package for the model(s) they wish to list. The submittal includes information about the plant, a product description including the capacity and model number of the tank, a complete set of drawings, and reinforcing details including structural calculations. The documents must be stamped by a structural or professional engineer. Once the submittal is approved, the plant undergoes an unannounced inspection that includes a watertightness test on a tank chosen at random. The plant will be granted a product listing based on successful completion of the test. Listed products will appear on the NPCA website (precast.org) below the company name and the other products manufactured at the plant.

Just as NPCA Plant Certification enables quality-conscious agencies, engineers and specifiers to identify and select high-quality precast concrete manufacturers, the NPCA Product Listing Program takes certification one step further to include specific models of water and wastewater tanks. Plants displaying the NPCA Certified Plant and NPCA Listed Product markings on their tanks show that the plant's processes comply with industry standards and that each product also complies with design and performance standards.

Should you have any questions about the changes to the NPCA Quality Control Manual for Precast Concrete Plants 14th Edition, January 2019, please contact Phillip Cutler, P.E., director of quality assurance programs, pcutler@precast.org, (800) 366-7731