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PIMA Technical Bulletin Highlights Critical Differences Between Class I and Class A Roof Assemblies

Alexandria, VA – The Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Associations (PIMA) has issued a new technical bulletin detailing the differences between Class 1 and Class A roof assemblies. An often confusing issue is whether a “Class 1 roof” is the same as a “Class A roof”.

“To help ensure that buildings are properly protected, the most savvy building owners, specifiers and roofing contractors make certain that they fully understand the performance test criteria for roof assemblies,” said George Smith, assistant vice president and group manager at FM Approvals, a nationally recognized testing laboratory.

The bulletin specifically notes the differences between Class 1 and Class A roof assemblies including:

- ❖ A Class A roof is the result of *one* test, the external spread of flame test. It is governed by compliance to either the UL 790 standard or ASTM E 108 standard.
- ❖ A Class 1 roof has undergone a *series of tests* including the external spread of flame described under the Class A rating, plus wind, hail, corrosion and leakage. An insulated steel deck roof assembly must also pass fire tests by FM Approvals which measure the potential for fire spread on the underside of a roof deck.
- ❖ The test standard to achieve a Class 1 rating is more comprehensive than the standard used to gain a Class A rating. All Class 1 roof assemblies are Class A, B or C roofs, but not all Class A roof systems meet Class 1.
- ❖ All roof assemblies must be installed as tested. Substitution of any component, such as insulation type and thickness, in tested roof assemblies can only be granted by FM Approvals or UL and may require additional testing.

“There continues to be confusion in the marketplace about these two test methods,” said Jared Blum, President of PIMA. “In the past few months we have seen substitutions of roof components which may be inappropriate and could pose a potential risk to building occupants. We hope this bulletin will bring clarity to the confusion.”

PIMA issues technical bulletins to keep roofing contractors, architects, roofing consultants and specifiers apprised of the latest information about polyiso insulation. A copy of this technical bulletin, PIMA Technical Bulletin #111 “Class 1 and Class A Roof Assemblies Are Not The Same,” can be found on the PIMA web site at www.pima.org.

PIMA is the national trade organization that advances the use of polyiso insulation, one of the nation's most widely used and cost-effective insulation products. PIMA's membership consists of manufacturers and marketers of polyiso insulation, as well as suppliers to the industry. For more information about this legislation, please visit the PIMA Web site at www.pima.org, or call 703-684-1136.