



# NABA

National Air Barrier Association

## The National Air Barrier Association Overview

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**Naba's key objective is to provide building owners with quality products and installations that perform to design expectations.**

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The National Air Barrier Association Overview

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**What and Who is Naba?**

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The National Air Barrier Association is a national, federally incorporated, not-for-profit association. It was officially incorporated on September 8, 1995 and falls under Part II of the Canada Corporations Act for a no share capital corporation. As such, no one "owns" NABA, nor is a majority shareholder of the corporation. The association consists of two classes of membership, voting and non-voting. The association members are made up of contractors, manufacturers, design professionals, consultants and other interested parties.

The association is governed by a Board of Directors, that are appointed each year by the members of the association at their Annual General Meeting. Directors are elected for a term of 3 years. From the elected Board of Directors, an Executive is formed. The executive consists of a chairman, vice-chairman and a secretary/treasurer.

**What are the Objectives of the Association?**

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- To promote building performance develop air barrier standards and specifications
- To coordinate the interests of practitioners, contractors, manufacturers and suppliers
- To develop training and technology transfer programs for the industry
- To inform and educate architects, engineers, specification writers, developers, contractors, building owners, and the public on the benefits of air barriers
- To develop a trade designation and requirements for an air barrier technician
- To conduct and commission research about air barriers
- To advocate the advantages and benefits of professional air barrier installations
- To liaison between all persons and groups who are interested and/or who would benefit from professional air barrier installations
- To do all thing incidental and conductive to the attainment of these objectives

## **How is the Association Managed?**

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The National Air Barrier Association does not have any employees. NABA has retained the services of the bpc Building Professionals Consortium to manage their day-to-day association affairs. BPC manages a number of trade associations in Canada and the United States. Their head office is located in Winnipeg, MB, which serves as NABA's mailing address and office. BPC has managed NABA since its inception in 1995 and continues to do so today.

## **What is the Quality Assurance Program and How is it Administered?**

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The NABA Quality Assurance Program is a program that has been developed to increase the level of installed quality of air barrier systems in Canada and provide greater assurance to the building owner and design professional.

The Quality Assurance Program was developed by the bpc Building Professionals Consortium and was based upon the successes of other programs that were developed by BPC since 1988. The program was based upon the principles of ISO 9002. In Manitoba, a large cross-section of industry had input into the Quality Assurance Program, which included contractors, manufacturers, architects, engineers, building owners, utilities and consultants. After approximately 2 years of review and refinement by industry stakeholders, the NABA Quality Assurance Program was endorsed by NABA and launched in Manitoba.

The program encompasses a variety of initiatives that include pre-qualification requirements of contractors and installers, training and education, a method for installers to self-test their work, a reporting requirement and paper trail of the entire installation process, an independent auditor to conduct audits to confirm compliance to the program and NABA specifications and a process to deal with the loss of license by an individual participating in the program.

Again, NABA contracted out the day-to-day management of the Quality Assurance Program to the bpc Building Professionals Consortium who had the expertise and experience to manage the program. This also resolved any issues with the credibility of the program by having the program run by an unbiased 3rd party organization. Therefore alleviating any concern of "an old boys club". Once the rules were set and published, all individuals would be required to meet the same standards and requirements.

The Quality Assurance Program that was developed by BPC is updated on an on-going basis in order to streamline processes or enhance the program. Although NABA members have direct input into making recommendations for changes to the Quality Assurance Program, it is only after a thorough review is performed by BPC, along with actual "users" of the program that changes are made and implemented. "Users" of the program consist of non-biased individuals such as architects, engineers, building owners or government agencies that would specify the NABA Quality Assurance Program. Again, this was put in place to ensure the program would be fair for all parties involved and have a value to the building owner and design professional. A Quality Assurance Program dictated simply by contractors involved in the association was not deemed to provide a program that would take the interests of the building owners and design community to heart. The program has been developed for all parties involved, including architects, engineers, building owners, contractors and manufacturers.

## What Other Things Does NABA Do?

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Although the Quality Assurance Program is a big part of NABA, we do a lot more. NABA constantly strives to provide educational programs with "real-life" content to installers and the design community. Training is a large mandate of the association. NABA, both in Manitoba and other provinces puts on workshops for design professionals, general contractors, and industry professionals on a variety of air barrier topics.

Where you aware that locally, NABA received an award for their commitment to education by the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Foundation? The association has made educational presentations to local chapters of the Construction Specifications Canada across Canada, local Building Envelope Councils across Canada, local Building Officials Associations and local architects associations. NABA also works with groups such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the National Research Council of Canada (NRC), the Canadian Construction Materials Center (CCMC) on various industry issues and research projects in the air barrier industry.

NABA is also working with the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) on the development of National Standards for products and installation for air barriers, vapour barriers and breathable membranes.

**“ Develop a professional  
air barrier trade and industry dedicated  
to installing effective air barrier systems ”**

## Did You Know?

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- That the requirements for NABA licensed contractors is included in the National Master Specification published by Public Works Canada?
- Just about every architectural or design firm has specified NABA in Winnipeg?
- That many building owners such as Manitoba Housing Authority, Public Works Canada and Department of National Defense have specified NABA?
- The American Air Barrier Association was formed in 2000 in Boston, MA and has adopted a similar program for the entire US market based on the success of NABA.
- NABA is a "made in Manitoba" success story
- You probably had input into the development of the program or your comments have helped to better the program and industry.