



# Quick Reference Guide to Rigid Vinyl Profile Certification



**American  
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Association**

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# Quick Reference Guide to Rigid

## Why Certify?

In today's marketplace, testing alone is not always enough. Too many questions about test report validity and post-testing production exist to allow customers the peace of mind that they're getting the same quality product that met the specified industry standard. That's why certification programs exist.

The AAMA Window and Door Profile Certification Program is based on a conviction that any quality standard must include continuous adherence to the requirements of the standard. Therefore, the program includes procedures and stipulations for on-going quality control.

The AAMA Window and Door Certification Program, which addresses the performance of the whole finished unit, requires that structural and glass-retaining vinyl profiles used in windows and doors authorized for certification be themselves certified. With over 50 million AAMA Window and Door Certification labels sold for residential products each year, the demand for certified vinyl profiles clearly exists.

## How to Find Out More

This quick reference guide will provide a step-by-step overview of the vinyl profile certification program process. It addresses costs, timeline, qualifications, testing, inspections, and appropriate contacts. But remember – this guide will only introduce you to the process; you'll need to refer to AAMA Procedural Guide 109 for the technical details involved in profile certification.

## What Does Profile Certification Cost?

The initial sampling visit will be billed directly by the Program Validator and the fees will vary to cover costs for their time and travel expenses. Additionally, the Validator bills each licensee \$850 twice each year for the two unannounced annual plant inspections required by the program. Fees for conducting the actual sample testing are available directly from the Validator.

Fees paid directly to AAMA include the annual program fee, which is \$2,000 for non-members per plant and \$500 for AAMA members per plant, and monthly usage fees, which are self-reported by the licensee and calculated at \$0.32/\$1,000 of all sales of certified profiles. Therefore, if a licen-

see sells \$2 million worth of AAMA-certified profiles in a given month, its usage fees for that month would be \$640. Note that monthly usage fees are capped at \$2,500 per licensee/location, per month.

## How Long Will the Process Take?

The entire process of achieving profile certification can take as little as six weeks up to as much as 16 months (*Note: Longer timeframes are possible depending on smooth progression of each stage of the process*). Proper preparation and submittal of documentation during the initial steps will help to speed up the process; however, the primary determining factor is the weathering tests. Details about how weathering tests may impact your profile certification timeline are included later in this guide.

## The Who's Who of Profile Certification – Eligibility and Contacts

Any manufacturer whose profiles meet the designated voluntary specifications (listed later in this guide) and who signs a License Agreement may participate in the program.

AAMA owns the Profile Certification Program. Associated Laboratories, Inc. (ALI) is AAMA's independent Program Validator. The validator performs in-plant inspections, witnesses tests, validates test data, and performs other validation functions.

For all certification issues, communicate directly with the Validator:  
Associated Laboratories, Inc. (ALI)  
P.O. Box 152837 (75315)  
1323 Wall Street  
Dallas, TX 75215  
Phone 214-565-0593  
Fax 214-565-1094

or with the Product Certification Manager at AAMA headquarters (847-303-5664).

## Getting Started

The first step in the Profile Certification Program process is to sign the license agreement, which is available from AAMA headquarters or from the Validator. This agreement should be completed and returned to the Product Certification Manager by mail at AAMA headquarters.

Next, the applicant must submit all necessary documentation



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directly to the Validator before the initial sampling visit can be scheduled. Necessary documentation is detailed in Procedural Guide 109 and includes, but is not limited to, compound information to determine cell classification, drawings, colors, and nominal running weights. Note that errors in documentation submittal or incomplete submittals may delay completion of the certification process.

Once all documentation has been properly submitted to the Validator, the initial sampling visit will be scheduled for a date and time agreed upon with the applicant.

## Initial Sampling Visit

During the initial sampling visit, the Validator samples a specific percentage of the listed profiles for laboratory testing as well as one main frame and sash profile of each color included in the program for weathering testing. If the weathering requirements for certification are waived by an approved affidavit, the Validator will review the Quality Control requirements, the equipment used for testing and the competence of the personnel performing the tests. If the extruder requires weathering



prior to certification, these areas can be reviewed but are not required until the initial unannounced inspection (*see “Processing Samples: Weathering Tests” below*).

## Processing Samples: Weathering Tests

Samples taken during the initial sampling visit are sent to the Validator to be prepared for delivery to the weathering sites. Weathering tests include measurements at 6, 12, and 24 months. Note, however, that profiles passing the weatherability requirements at the 12-month measurement become qualified for certification at that time.

Furthermore, if the profile is made of a “known” compound and color, meaning that it is made of the same compound and color combination as was used in a different profile that has already passed weatherability requirements in the Profile Certification Program, it can immediately be authorized for certification. If this circumstance does not apply, then 12-month weathering must be completed before profiles can be authorized for certification.

Depending on how a given profile must be handled in terms of weathering tests, the time it takes to complete the Profile

The technical documents in the chart below include all of the performance requirements and testing procedures referenced in the Profile Certification Program for vinyl profiles. Refer to Procedural Guide 109 for detailed charts about exactly where specific performance criteria and testing procedures can be found within each of these documents.

AAMA 303-01	<i>Voluntary Specification for Poly (Vinyl Chloride) (PVC) Exterior Profiles</i>
AAMA 307-01	<i>Voluntary Performance Requirements and Test Procedures for Laminates Intended for Use on AAMA Certified Plastic Profiles</i>
AAMA 308-02	<i>Voluntary Specification for Cellular Poly Vinyl Chloride (PVC) Exterior Profiles</i>
AAMA 310-04	<i>Voluntary Specification for Reinforced Thermoplastic Fenestration Exterior Profile Extrusions</i>
AAMA 311-05	<i>Voluntary Specification for Rigid Thermoplastic Cellulosic Composite Fenestration Exterior Profiles</i>
AAMA 613-02	<i>Voluntary Performance Requirements and Test Procedures for Organic Coatings on Plastic Profiles</i>
AAMA 614-02	<i>Voluntary Specification, Performance Requirements and Test Procedures for High Performance Organic Coatings on Plastic Profiles</i>
AAMA 615-02	<i>Voluntary Specification, Performance Requirements and Test Procedures for Superior Performing Organic Coatings on Plastic Profiles</i>
ASTM D 4216-03	<i>Standard Specification for Rigid Poly (Vinyl Chloride) (PVC) and Related PVC and Chlorinated Poly (Vinyl Chloride) (PVC) Building Products Compounds</i>
ASTM D 4726-02	<i>Standard Specification for Rigid Poly (Vinyl Chloride) (PVC) Exterior-Profile Extrusions Used for Assembled Windows and Doors</i>

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Certification Program process and achieve authorization for certification can vary by as much as 14 months. In either case, however, it is important to note that it is the profile that is authorized for certification and not the compound, color, or extruder.

The Validator conducts unannounced inspections twice annually. At each of these inspections, a designated quantity of samples is taken for the physical requirement tests. Once annually, weathering samples are taken (a frame and sash of each color and compound). Additionally, lead testing is performed at every inspection.

## What If the Profile Fails During Testing?

The AAMA Profile Certification Program includes opportunities for re-testing samples in the event of failure of any of the required tests. See Procedural Guide 109 for details about re-testing.

## Maintaining Profile Certification – Labeling, Inspections and Quality Control

The AAMA Profile Certification Label is coded for identification of the licensee and plant location. Labels shall be affixed only at the plant location and may be affixed to the carton containing the certified profile or the licensee's invoice.

The first unannounced plant inspection by the Validator is conducted either within six months of the initial sampling (if a "known" compound and color is used) or after the initial 12-month weatherability results are available, provided the sample met the requirements.



Program licensees are also required to maintain permanent Quality Control Records that include information about samples, personnel, and equipment calibration. Furthermore, the plant Quality Control

Department must establish a procedure for performing in-plant quality control tests for impact resistance, dimensional stability, heat resistance, and weight tolerance. The results of all quality control

testing and any resulting corrective action must be recorded in a Quality Control Log and maintained for review by the Validator during in-plant inspections.

## Wrap-Up

With profiles authorized for certification, your company can now use the AAMA name and logo to promote the performance of its certified profiles. Plus, all vinyl window fabricators participating in the

AAMA Window and Door Certification Program are now potential customers. Simply contact AAMA or the Program Validator for a copy of the license agreement and Procedural Guide 109 and you're on your way.



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