



CHANGE IS GOOD

by Sara Vaughn

DID YOU KNOW?

NRCA ProCertification will have 18 certifications—15 for roof, waterproofing and rooftop photovoltaic system installers; one for foremen; and two for repair and maintenance personnel.

>>> NRCA ProCertification® now is more convenient and affordable for industry professionals

Two years ago, NRCA launched NRCA ProCertification, a revolutionary national certification initiative designed to create a competent, sustainable and high-performing roofing industry workforce. Through NRCA ProCertification, experienced workers who demonstrate substantial roofing skills and knowledge can earn verifiable professional certifications issued by NRCA.

Certifications currently available include:

- NRCA ProCertified® Asphalt Shingle Systems Installer
- NRCA ProCertified EPDM Systems Installer
- NRCA ProCertified Thermoplastic Systems Installer
- NRCA ProCertified Roofing Foreman



NRCA
ProCertification®

NRCA ultimately will create certifications for all major roof, waterproofing and rooftop photovoltaic system installations, plus roof system repair and maintenance.

NRCA recently implemented several changes to ProCertification to streamline the certification process for roofing professionals.



HANDS-ON PERFORMANCE EXAM OPPORTUNITIES

A roof system installer who has met all eligibility requirements can schedule a hands-on performance exam with a local Qualified Assessor at any time. Appropriate safety precautions will be in place to comply with COVID-19 restrictions.

Roof system installers are invited to take hands-on performance exams during the 2021 International Roofing Expo® in Las Vegas Aug. 10-12. Time slots are available for 40 thermoplastic roof system installers and 12 clay and concrete tile roof system installers.

Additional hands-on performance exam testing opportunities for asphalt shingle roof system installers, clay and concrete tile roof system installers and thermoplastic roof system installers will be available this fall in Orlando, Fla., and Tampa, Fla. NRCA is working with the Florida Roofing and Sheet Metal Contractors Association Inc. and SOPREMA® Inc., Wadsworth, Ohio, to finalize locations and dates.

Online testing

The most significant changes are to the NRCA ProCertified roof system installer online knowledge exams, which NRCA members' workers now can schedule to take for free anytime.

A roof system installer seeking NRCA ProCertification must pass a general low- or steep-slope online roof system exam, depending on the type of roof system for which he or she wants to be certified, before advancing to the required hands-on performance exam. Previously, a roof system installer had to pass an online knowledge exam specific to the roof system type for which he or she wanted to be certified. Developed in accordance with rigorous international certification standards, the exams accurately assess the skills and knowledge required by professional roof system installers.

A roof system installer can register for an online knowledge exam through NRCA's website, nrca.net, and take the exam at a time and location that works best for him or her. Previously, an interested candidate had to register with a third-party vendor to take a proctored online exam at an NRCA-approved testing center, which often meant the candidate had to travel to a testing center and take the exam during a workday.

“NRCA and its committees did a lot of work to improve the way the online knowledge exam is presented while ensuring the path to ProCertification is not watered down,” says Doug Duncan, president of Nations Roof of Illinois, Villa Park, and vice chairman liaison of NRCA's ProCertification Oversight Committee. “Roofing contractors, roof system installers and NRCA determined taking a proctored online exam at an approved testing center is cumbersome, so NRCA streamlined the process.”

Additional testing changes have been implemented to help support roof system installers interested in NRCA ProCertification. For example, a candidate who is unsure of his or her aptitude now can take an online knowledge exam before registering and paying for NRCA ProCertification. A candidate also can take the exam as many times as needed until he or she achieves a passing score, which will help alleviate test anxiety. Helpful test preparation resources are available at nrca.net/procertreadiness, including low- and steep-slope online knowledge exam content outlines, job task analyses and readiness checklists.

Each online knowledge exam contains 60 questions in multiple-choice format and can be taken in English or Spanish. Test takers can choose to have the questions and potential answers read aloud in addition to viewing the text if desired. Results from passing the test are valid for 12 months to meet the eligibility requirement for NRCA ProCertification.

Employees of NRCA member companies can take the online knowledge exams for free; nonmembers pay \$29 per exam. Previously, the online exams only could be taken after candidates registered and paid for NRCA ProCertification, and each candidate only had one attempt to pass his or her exam. The fee for retaking the online exam was \$199 for an NRCA member and \$399 for a nonmember. NRCA is confident the revised testing process and pricing make the online knowledge exams more convenient, accessible and affordable.

EPDM systems installer

NRCA ProCertified EPDM Systems Installer is the newest certification available to roofing professionals. Earning an NRCA ProCertified EPDM Systems Installer certification demonstrates an individual knows how to correctly and safely install EPDM roof systems and verifies his or her professionalism.

To be eligible for the NRCA ProCertified EPDM Systems Installer certification, a roof system installer must have at least 24 months' experience installing EPDM roof systems, including all types of flashings, sheet layout and attachment systems. His or her most recent experience must be within the past 12 months. He or she must pass the low-slope online knowledge exam, as well as submit an application with employment information validating work experience requirements and an Employer Verification form from his or her current employer.

Once an installer has proved his or her eligibility, the installer must schedule and pass a hands-on performance exam while being observed by an NRCA ProCertification Qualified Assessor who will assess the installer's applied knowledge and skills. Qualified Assessors are designated in specific types of roof systems for which they can evaluate the hands-on performances of roof system installers. A certification then is issued if the installer passes the hands-on exam.

The price for roof system installer certification is \$799 for an NRCA member and \$1,599 for a nonmember. The fee for taking the hands-on performance exam is negotiated with the Qualified Assessor proctoring the exam.

The NRCA ProCertified Clay and Concrete Tile Systems

Installer certification is set to launch next month. The NRCA ProCertified Sheet Metal Flashings and Accessories Installer certification is scheduled to launch in late summer.

A worthwhile investment

NRCA ProCertification helps advance the roofing industry's professionalism by establishing a workforce with credentials that prove skill and competency.

"NRCA ProCertification is a win-win for everyone," says Kelly Van Winkle, president and CEO of King of Texas Roofing Co. LP, Grand Prairie. "If we want our industry to be respected and seen as professional, we need to have workers who are seen as professional. The quickest way to achieve that is through education and certification."

Labor shortages and worker retention continue to challenge the industry, and NRCA ProCertification can help employers attract new workers and retain skilled professionals. Employers that invest in their workers show appreciation for their employees' skills and demonstrate commitment to their futures while also presenting a clear career path for prospective workers.

Sherri Miles, president of Miles Roofing Inc., Chesapeake, Va., and vice president of J.D. Miles & Sons Inc., Chesapeake, says NRCA ProCertification helps her elevate her current longtime employees while also helping attract people interested in a construction career who may not otherwise choose roofing work.

"Elevating the people we have now shows a path of progression that details how long it will take and the steps involved in achieving certification," Miles says. "When people can see a fulfilling pathway to success in roofing,

they will want to join. It's another way my company can sell roofing as a career to new applicants who are coming out of college or transitioning from another job."

Employers that have certified workers on their teams also can boost customer confidence in the quality of services provided.

"As a company with NRCA ProCertified workers, we can go to our clients and say: 'We've been telling you our guys are really good at what they do, but here's a third-party certification that now establishes they are all that we say they are,'" Miles explains.

Customer confidence can result in increased sales, new referrals and enhanced company reputation within local markets.

Ready for you

According to NRCA CEO Reid Ribble, the recent changes made to NRCA ProCertification reflect NRCA's commitment to and engagement with its members.

"NRCA continues to expand, modify and reform ProCertification to make our processes more reliable and responsive to the participating companies and their workers," Ribble says. "NRCA ProCertification continually improves as a result of important comments and advice we receive from our members."

Industry professionals who are ready to reap the benefits of NRCA ProCertification can find resources and registration information at nrca.net/procertification.

SARA VAUGHN is *Professional Roofing's* assistant editor and NRCA's manager of communications.

>>> FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS >>>

How many certifications can a roof system installer earn? How many designations can a roofing foreman earn?

A roof system installer can earn a certification in each roof system for which he or she qualifies, and a roofing foreman can earn a designation in each roof system for which he or she qualifies.

Do seasoned employees need to prepare for the exams?

NRCA ProCertification is only for experienced workers; however, NRCA provides information to help workers decide whether they are ready to pursue certification. Although more seasoned installers may feel ready to take their exams without preparation, NRCA recommends all candidates review the readiness resources available at nrca.net/procertreadiness.

What is considered a passing score for the online knowledge exam and hands-on performance exam?

Online knowledge exam results only are reported as a pass/fail score. Candidates completing hands-on performance exams must complete evaluation forms to rate their Qualified Assessors before they can see their exam scores. All scores are calculated using standard certification practices.

Will I be notified which questions and/or tasks were incorrectly answered or performed?

For both exams, NRCA only will provide general feedback, such as areas of poor performance, not question- or task-specific results.

Once I am NRCA ProCertified, are there any requirements for maintaining certifications?

Yes, every three years NRCA ProCertified installers and foremen can maintain their certifications by completing and documenting a designated number of hours of system-specific work experience along with technical and safety training. NRCA ProCertified individuals who hold certifications in more than one system will need to complete maintenance for each certification held. Technical and safety training hours may be used toward the maintenance for multiple certifications if the training was completed within three years of earning each certification. A separate maintenance fee is required for each certification.

