



For Immediate Release

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TexaStone Quarries, which operates natural stone quarries and fabrication facilities in Garden City, Texas, is the first company in the world to be named a certified stone producer that adheres to tough new sustainability standards, it was announced today by the Natural Stone Council which completed the development of the voluntary standards earlier this year.

Under the new council certification program, called ANSI/NSC-373 Sustainable Production of Natural Dimension Stone, six quarries operated by the company, were awarded "Gold" certification and its closely-allied fabrication plant "Silver" certification after facility inspections by NSF International of Ann Arbor, Michigan, which also verified the firm's voluminous paperwork application.

"This is wonderful" said Brenda Edwards, owner/general manager of the 19-year-old company, located about 35 miles from Midland, Texas. "It was a tough process, but the rewards for our diligence and dedication in exceeding the basic sustainability standards and becoming the first company ever certified to the standards is totaling rewarding."

TexaStone quarries and fabricates high quality limestone that is specified and used by architects, builders and owners throughout the United States. One of its signature projects was the limestone supplied for the recently-completed George W Bush Presidential Library and Museum in Dallas, Texas.

The standards cover nine facets of a quarry and fabricator's operation, with an optional element called "Innovation". The nine include water usage and recycling, custody and transportation, site and plant management, land reclamation and adaptive use, corporate governance, energy use and conservation, management of excess process materials and waste, safer chemical and materials management and human and health considerations.

"Certification of TexaStone as a sustainable producer of natural dimension stone products is a major milestone for NSC's nearly five-year program to develop sustainability standards that dovetail with natural stone's inherent qualities of beauty, durability and variety," said Duke Pointer, Executive Director of the Natural Stone Council. "We can now add certified sustainability to the world's oldest building material.

"Brenda Edwards and the TexaStone team are to be congratulated for achieving this "first," and we know the ability to use the NSC's Gold and Silver certification seals in marketing will give her company a competitive advantage among those specifiers and users who thoroughly embrace the "green" movement and are looking for sustainability in the products they utilize in their projects."

"Because of TexaStone's sustained, pioneering 10-month effort to achieve certification, other stone companies seeking certification for quarries and fabrication facilities, will probably be able to achieve this distinction in a significantly shorter period of time." Pointer explained, "Since the standards were formally announced, several stone companies have begun the certification process.

There are four levels of certification each for quarriers and fabricators, bronze, silver, gold and platinum. Each individual entity can be certified individually. The scalability of the program allows companies to reach higher levels than their original designation as they improve their sustainability processes. "Stone quarriers and fabricators in the U.S. and around the world can be certified under ANSI/NSC-373", Pointer said. NSF International, because of their early involvement with the standard will likely be the primary verifier around the world. There also are Chain of Custody certification standards for

stone distributors, but that process may not fully come into play until there is a significant volume of certified stone from quarriers and fabricators.

There are 18 different requirements under the ANSI/NSC-373 standard with a total of 41 possible points. The more points a company earns, the higher level of designation. The maximum points will earn the platinum level.

Companies can upgrade to the various levels by improving their performance in the various facets of the program.

"Manage water recycling and energy use better and earn more points," Pointer explained. Each facility must be recertified every four years.

Pointer said the new standards will level the playing field between natural dimension stone and other building components.

"Though natural stone is man's oldest building material and is hugely popular in all phases of construction, the growing "green" movement required us to develop standards that allow us to compare out products with others in the marketplace."

"If you are going to sell to the architectural community, stone producers are going to have to conform to this standard," said Brenda Edwards.

ANSI/NSC-373 was developed using the consensus based ANSI (American National Standards Institute) process and can be applied internationally with certification by a third party certifier like NSF International. For further information, contact, Duke Pointer, Executive Director of NSC, dukepointer@naturalstonecouncil.org. Natural Stone Council, P.O.Box 539. Hollis, NH 03049.