



# Property Risk Consulting Guidelines

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## NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED TESTING LABORATORIES

### INTRODUCTION

Many codes and standards require products or equipment to be tested to a nationally recognized standard and listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. Broadly defined, listed products or equipment have been tested and subsequently listed in a public document. National Fire Protection Association and American Society of Mechanical Engineers defines listed as: “equipment or materials included in a list published by an organization acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction and concerned with product evaluation, that maintains periodic inspection of production of listed equipment or materials and whose listing states either that the equipment or material meets appropriate standards or has been tested and found suitable for the use in a specified manner.”

Nationally recognized testing laboratories have been accredited by an outside agency. Laboratories accredited by an outside agency have proven that their equipment and staff can meet certain standards. AXA XL Risk Consulting believes an outside agency’s accreditation of a test laboratory will help not only the laboratory but also their clients and the public.

The listing of a product or piece of equipment by a nationally recognized testing laboratory ensures the products or equipment has been reviewed and tested to reliably perform a certain task and that all products or equipment, throughout the production run, will operate the same. Products or equipment that are not tested or listed do not have this reliability.

### POSITION

Where a code or standard requires products or equipment be tested or listed by a testing laboratory, the testing laboratory be financially independent, have properly trained personnel to conduct the test, conducts follow-up visits to ensure the product or equipment is constructed using the same equipment, product, and method as the sample that was tested, and the laboratory publishes a list of the manufacturers and their products that have passed the tests.

In the U.S. the U. S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has an accreditation program known as the Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratories (NRTL) program. The NRTL accreditation process covers the criteria AXA XL Risk Consulting looks for. The entire detailed accreditation process can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) in Appendix A to Part 29 Section 1910.7 (29 CFR 1910.7). AXA XL Risk Consulting will accept only nationally recognized testing laboratories in the United States that are accredited by OSHA. Those laboratories that are presently accredited by OSHA are listed in Appendix A.

Outside the U.S. there are some labs that meet the criteria set forth by OSHA. These labs are also listed in Appendix A. Some labs outside the US do conduct testing, listing, and follow-up service; these are the national labs of some countries. While not NRTL accredited, they perform the same accreditation.

## **DISCUSSION**

In addition to the OSHA's NRTL program, the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standard and Technology (NIST) and the model building code, International Code Council have accreditation programs for testing laboratories. NIST oversees the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) and the building code groups oversees the National Evaluation Service (NES).

The NVLAP accreditation process includes on-site assessment, proficiency testing, technical evaluation and administrative review. The technical evaluation covers the laboratory's quality control system, properly trained personnel to conduct the tests, facilities and equipment to conduct the tests, calibration or testing procedures and calibration or testing records. The NES accreditation process includes administrative review, quality control system, properly trained personnel to conduct the tests, facilities and equipment to conduct the tests, calibration or testing procedures and calibration or testing records. Neither of these programs include: a follow-up service by the testing laboratory of the products they have tested, a public document indicating which manufactures have passed the test, or financially independence of the test laboratory. Therefore, these are not acceptable to AXA XL Risk Consulting.