**Wausau’s psychiatric windows contribute to peace of mind, meet required safety, desired daylighting, energy efficiency**

Wausau, Wis. (September 2009) -- While patient safety remains a primary consideration in psychiatric applications, many health care facilities are seeking to create a more home-like and healing atmosphere with natural light and unrestricted views to the outside. Balancing these goals for more than 25 years, Wausau Window and Wall Systems provides architecturally aesthetic, high-performance, psychiatric windows.

“Windowless environments or openings with jail-like bars or heavy security screens can feel imposing and constricting, which may not be conducive to positive mental health,” acknowledges Lisa May, Wausau’s health care market manager. “Whether building a new hospital, renovating existing spaces, or leveraging ‘adaptive re-use’ of structures originally intended for another occupancy, window selection in areas accessible to psychiatric patients can be challenging.”

Offered with optional triple glazing, Wausau’s new 4000i-DT series, addresses today’s need for enhanced energy performance through a broad selection of exterior glass options. The window’s polyamide nylon thermal barrier also allows the aluminum framing to be conveniently and durably finished in one color on the interior and a different one on the exterior. Finishes may be requested with liquid paints composed of up to 100% post-industrial waste, or powder paint and anodize finishes specified as VOC-free coatings.

Further contributing to these windows’ long lifecycle and green goals, all of Wausau’s psychiatric grade window products are available with high, recycled aluminum content. Integral between-glass blinds minimize maintenance, reduce solar heat gain and offer privacy, without the potential dangers of exposed cords and slats. These features may aid buildings seeking certification under such programs as the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED® Green Building Rating System™. Demonstrating its commitment to energy-efficiency and environmental leadership, Wausau’s own manufacturing center is certified LEED-Silver.

In addition to the environmental, thermal, air, water and structural considerations of conventional windows, psychiatric windows often must be designed to withstand high impacts from the interior, to confine patients, to restrict their passage to unauthorized areas, or to delay and frustrate escape attempts. Based on the basic physics of moving bodies, these human impacts can be as high as 2000 foot-pounds, requiring 0.5-inch thick polycarbonate interior glazing.

Energy must be transferred sequentially through hardware, window frames, anchorage, and substrates. While Wausau’s structural engineering team has developed useful algorithms for analyzing system performance under these high-impact loads, testing is still recommended to validate security of the total system. Wausau has conducted dozens of such tests using 100- to 200-pound shot-filled bags (approximating the density and deformation characteristics of the human body), dropped from various heights.
Through development programs with state agencies and their architectural consulting partners in New York, Missouri, Tennessee, Minnesota and Wisconsin, Wausau has designed several custom psychiatric fenestration systems, as well as its standard 3250-DT “drop tested” Series of fixed and in-swing casement windows. When existing windows are weather-tight, economical Wausau 2187-DT S.E.A.L. interior prime windows offer enhancement of Sound, Energy, Air and Light control, along with human impact resistance.

Depending on the level of supervision provided, as well as furnishings and equipment in the patient spaces, other design criteria may apply. “Wausau’s psychiatric windows are engineered from the ground up; seldom will standard windows fitted with safety glass or polycarbonate prove sufficient,” adds May. “Codes and standards vary widely with jurisdiction, and consultation with hospital staff is also recommended.”

As noted in the American Institute of Architects’ (AIA’s) 2006 Guidelines for Design and Construction of Health Care Facilities: “The built environment, no matter how well constructed, cannot be relied on as an absolute preventive measure. Staff awareness of their environment, and the behavior risks and needs of the patients served in the environment are absolute necessities…The environment should be characterized by a feeling of openness with emphasis on natural light.”

To learn more about Wausau’s psychiatric windows and its other products for health care facilities, please contact Lisa May at healthcare@wausauwindow.com or call 877-678-2983. Product descriptions, architectural details, AutoCAD files, specifications and technical guides for Wausau’s windows, doors, specialty glazing and cladding products, and curtainwall systems also can be found online at www.wausauwindow.com.

_Nationally recognized for its innovative expertise, Wausau Window and Wall Systems is an industry leader in engineering window and curtainwall systems for commercial and institutional construction applications. For more than 30 years, Wausau has worked closely with architects, building owners and contractors to realize their vision for aesthetic beauty, sustainability and lasting value, while striving to maintain the highest level of customer service, communication and overall satisfaction. Wausau is a part of Apogee Enterprises, Inc., a publicly held, U.S. corporation._

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