Product Fire Ratings

It is common for Elite TrimWorks to receive questions regarding the Fire Rating of our various products. "A" fire ratings are necessary for commercial applications such as Nursing Homes, Daycare Centers, Offices, Hotels and various other public facilities. Although our MDF is rated as an "A" by its Material Safety Data Sheet for Flame Spread, this (MSDS fire rating) is all too often not enough to meet some Municipal Fire Code regulations. Local codes often follow American Society for Testing and Materials guidelines.

Flame spread ratings/classes are based on the ASTM E-84/UL 723 "Test for Surface Burning Characteristics of Building Materials." This test measures the relative rate at which flame spreads over a given surface and the degree of smoke development and toxicity. Class ratings and their associated flame spread ratings are:

Class Flame spread
Class "A" or I: 0-25
Class "B" or II: 26-75
Class "C" or III: 76-200

(This rating applies only to a specific single component such as a paint film, wall covering or some other single piece of material)
After doing some extensive research, we found that there are Fire Retardant Additives which can be purchased at a reasonable cost. These additives make paint form a burn resistant surface which insulates the substrate from the flame, thus slowing the flame spread. These additives are normally mixed with **Interior Flat Latex Paints** although various manufacturers have products that can be used with other types of paint. Once added to paint, these products will not adversely affect the color, spread ability, curing time or texture of the paint. Paint mixed with fire retardant additives may be applied via brush, roller or spray gun although some limitations apply (please consult with your owners manual). When dried these additives are completely undetectable. Once applied to our trims, the trim is protected with an "A" or "B" fire rating depending on the amount of additive used.

Please note that the use of the above mentioned products will not make a material completely FIRE PROOF but they will drastically reduce the spread of a fire which in turn gives the occupants more time to escape during a fire. We encourage customers to do some research for themselves regarding local fire regulations and the different restrictions that apply in your municipality. Check out http://www.hytechsales.com/flameguard.html for more information or do a search on the internet for "fire resistant paint additives". Although we do not endorse any particular product or company, we feel that it is important that our customers know all their options.