



Firestop Contractors International Association

FCIA Bulletin – Mineral Wool Availability & Firestop Systems – April 19, 2024

Executive Summary

The Firestop Contractors International Association has heard from members that Rock/Stone/Slag Mineral Wool (known as Mineral Wool in this paper) delivery times can be up to 27 weeks (approx. 7 months) depending on the type of material and listing requirements. We understand some manufacturers are supplying mineral wool on a “planned availability” (allocation) basis. Contact your supplier or the mineral wool manufacturer for specific project mineral wool delivery schedules.

Mineral Wool & Listings Rules

Mineral wool is available from many manufacturers worldwide in tested and listed fire-resistance-rated systems, also known as listings. It is also used in non-listed assemblies in buildings.

Supply Issues

FCIA leadership has recently been made aware that North American mineral wool supply times have been extended significantly – in some cases up to 27 weeks. Know that FCIA leadership is working with manufacturer partners to resolve the issue as fast as possible.

From what we understand at this time, the following issues have caused the long supply times:

- Manufacturing facility shutdown has led to reduced supply.
- New manufacturing facility ramp up has gone slower than planned, extending lead times.
- Strike(s) (2023 Sept) slowed production in some manufacturing facilities.
- Some listings, particularly in Perimeter Fire Containment, limit material manufacturer choice to only one manufacturer, with no substitutions allowed.

All these factors have played a part in causing supply times to extend out longer than normal in the firestop industry.

Also, know that manufacturers state that they have produced more mineral wool than ever before due to demand growth. We understand there are manufacturing projects creating additional capacity coming soon. While this will increase capacity to previous plant levels, the increase may not be realized not for some time.

The Listing Issued May Limit Brand Choices

In **Perimeter Fire Containment Systems**, the mineral wool product manufacturer and density are mandated in the listing from UL Solutions, Intertek, or other nationally recognized testing laboratories when fire tested as prescribed in ASTM E2307. No substitutions are allowed when a specific manufacturer’s material is part of a listing by name.

Usually, **Joints and Voids** density, compression, and orientation in the breach of a fire-resistance-rated assembly is listed. Sometimes this is generic in a listing; however, sometimes the listing states that only one manufacturer’s material shall be used, and again, no substitutions are allowed.

For **Penetrations**, many listings are generic when tested in accordance with ASTM E814, UL 1479 and only state mineral wool density and (possibly) compression. Lead times might not be as affected with listings using generic mineral wool products. Substitute products are allowed in this situation.

FCIA Recommendations

FCIA recommends firestop contractors communicate directly with the mineral wool suppliers. At least one mineral wool manufacturer has stated to contact them directly even if purchasing through distribution.

- Provide the supply time needs for specific projects, even if buying through distribution.
- Suppliers/Manufacturers might be able to work with the contractor on specific projects to reduce material supply times and come up with creative solutions.
- Contact the supplier for project-specific letters regarding supply times.
- Consider contacting multiple distributors to find multiple sources of mineral wool.

Summary

FCIA's leadership is in conversation with manufacturers about the supply issue and extended supply times for mineral wool.

- Where generic (packing) materials are listed in a system, use generic mineral wool materials. If forming materials are specified, they still need to be certified under UL Solution's XHKU category or Intetek's Directory, where the system was listed.
- Where a listing states a manufacturer by name, install that material only.
 - o This is important with ASTM E2307 Perimeter Fire Containment Systems.
 - o Verify listings at www.UL.com/PiQ or at www.bpDirectory.Intertek.com.
- FCIA advises members to work closely with their preferred manufacturer EJ provider to find the best solution available for specific projects.
- FCIA urges firestop system and mineral wool manufacturers to continue to be as creative as possible to solve the supply time issue, *without compromising fire and life safety*, and to reduce supply times as fast as possible.
- FCIA suggests manufacturers consider fire testing alternative materials for listings that preserve fire and life safety of the listings, at their own fire test laboratories or elsewhere.

For detailed information on mineral wool product supply times, contact the individual supplier/manufacturer that is being used in the listing.

Know that FCIA leadership has been working on this issue and is communicating with the mineral wool manufacturers to help with a resolution.

FCIA's Manufacturer Member List has FCIA mineral wool manufacturer members [contact info](#).

Thanks for being an FCIA member.