

# THE BURN

Winter 2025 Wrap Up

## Honoring Douglas S. Erickson, FASHE: A Lifetime of Impact on Healthcare Design

Specified Technologies Inc. Staff



The Russ Coile Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to healthcare facility design, and this year, we are proud to celebrate Douglas S. Erickson, FASHE, as the 2025 recipient at ASHE PDC.

With nearly 50 years of dedication to improving the built environment in healthcare, Doug has been instrumental in shaping the Facility Guidelines for Design and Construction (FGI Guidelines)—a foundational resource that ensures safe, effective, and high-quality healthcare facility design. His impact on the industry is immeasurable, from co-founding the Facility Guidelines Institute (FGI) in 1998 to leading major codes and standards initiatives within the NFPA and ASHRAE that continue to influence national standards.

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## Advancing Barrier Management Practices in Partnership with STI

All of us at STI are incredibly proud that Doug has been recognized with this prestigious award. Doug has been a critical component of STI's success, supporting our organization as Senior Advisor for Healthcare since 1997. His expertise and guidance have been invaluable in helping us understand the complex challenges of building and maintaining fire and smoke-rated barriers in hospitals

## Honoring Douglas S. Erickson, FASHE: A Lifetime of Impact on Healthcare Design (continued)

and long-term care facilities. With his insight, we have developed solutions that truly make a difference in hospital and nursing home life safety.

Doug was instrumental in shaping STI's popular [Barrier Management Program \(BMP\)](#), which has been implemented by hundreds of hospitals. His passion for education and safety is evident in the countless trainings and symposiums he has led alongside STI, helping to elevate industry standards and create safer environments of care. Doug's dedication and partnership have had a lasting impact, and we are grateful for the opportunity to work alongside him in our mission to improve firestopping and healthcare life safety.

### A Legacy of Leadership and Advocacy

Doug's impact in healthcare facility design dates back to 1978 when he worked at The Joint Commission and served on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services committee responsible for writing the Minimum Construction Requirements. He then championed the FGI Guidelines alongside Joseph G. Sprague and J. Armand Burgun, ensuring their survival after DHHS discontinued their publication in 1984. His passion for maintaining and evolving these critical standards led him to serve as Vice Chair and later Chair of the Health Guidelines Revision Committee for five revision cycles. From 2015 to 2023, he continued his leadership as FGI's CEO, further strengthening the role of guidelines in shaping healthcare facility construction and compliance.

Beyond his work with FGI, Doug represented the American Hospital Association (AHA) and ASHE members for 26 years on national codes, standards, and built environment committees, advocating for the highest standards in healthcare infrastructure.

### Recognition and Lasting Contributions

Doug's dedication has earned him numerous accolades, including:

- ASHE's Crystal Eagle Award
- FGI's Pioneer Award
- American College of Healthcare Architects' Presidential Citation

In recognition of his lasting influence, the Douglas S. Erickson Health Care Research Award was established by FGI and The Center for Health Design, bridging the gap between design research and improved health outcomes.

### A Well-Deserved Honor

Doug's contributions have shaped the way healthcare facilities are designed, built, and maintained, leaving a lasting impact on the industry and future generations of healthcare professionals. Since receiving the Russ Coile Lifetime Achievement Award at ASHE PDC, we celebrate his vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment to advancing healthcare facility design.

### Join us in congratulating Douglas S. Erickson, FASHE, on this well-deserved recognition!



## How Learning New Skills Can Propel Your Career



**John Zalepka**

Director of Training & Industry Engagements

We often hear that career growth requires jumping to a new company, but in reality, some of the best opportunities come from learning new skills within your current role. Investing in yourself not only enhances your ability to contribute but also positions you for greater responsibilities and leadership opportunities.

I recently put this concept into practice as I prepared for an upcoming ASHE PDC continuing education (CE) presentation. Since healthcare construction has unique firestop challenges, I knew I needed to go beyond my existing expertise to deliver the most value. That realization led me to complete a 17.5-hour CE course on healthcare construction as well as seeking out subject matter experts (SMEs) in the healthcare field to glean from. It was an investment of time and effort, but it ensured that I could confidently engage with my audience and speak their language.

### The Power of Upskilling in Your Current Role

When I reflect on my own career progression—from territory manager to training & development to industry engagements—one common thread stands out: continuous learning. Each step forward wasn't just about working harder; it was about expanding my expertise in ways that aligned with my company's goals and industry needs.

### Lessons from My Own Career Progression

#### 1. Identify Knowledge Gaps Early

The key to staying relevant in any role is recognizing what you don't know. For me, it was understanding the nuances of firestop in healthcare construction and how different standards and regulations apply in that space.

#### 2. Invest Time, Even When It's Hard

Finding the time for a 17.5-hour CEU course and reaching SMEs while balancing daily responsibilities wasn't easy, but prioritizing education pays off in ways that aren't immediately obvious. The knowledge I gained will have long-term benefits, not just for this presentation but for future engagements as well.

#### 3. Position Yourself as a Thought Leader

Learning new skills isn't just about personal growth—it's about elevating your voice within your industry. By deepening my expertise, I can now help educate others, whether it's contractors, architects, engineers, or facility managers who need guidance on fire-resistive construction in healthcare.

#### 4. Leverage What You Learn

Knowledge isn't just for your own benefit—it's a tool to help others. My new insights into healthcare-specific firestop challenges will now shape better training content, sales strategies, and industry discussions.

### Closing Thoughts

If you're looking to advance in your career, take stock of the skills that could set you apart. Whether it's pursuing a certification, taking on a new project, or simply shadowing an expert in your field, continuous learning is one of the most powerful ways to move forward.

The best part? It's not just about personal growth. When we invest in our own learning, we elevate not only ourselves but also our colleagues, our companies, and our industries. And in an industry like firestop and life safety, staying ahead of the curve isn't just about career advancement—it's about making buildings and people safer.

So, what's the next skill you'll learn?



## Spotlight on UL Systems



**David Vail**

P.E., Project Manager & Codes/Standards

### Firestop Blocks!

Frequent readers of The Burn will recall when the new SpecSeal® Firestop Blocks were announced in the [Summer 2024](#) issue. STI is proud to announce a handful of new systems that reflect the most recent results of our ongoing testing program with the blocks. First off, [C-AJ-4121](#) and [W-L-4115](#) are firestop systems for maximum 24 in. wide by 6 in. deep wire basket or open ladder cable trays in concrete floor/wall assemblies or gypsum wallboard assemblies, respectively. Both systems allow a cable fill rate of up to 45 percent of the tray area and the SpecSeal® Firestop Blocks can be installed with either the 5 or 8 in. dimension through the opening. A maximum 2 in. cable bundle, which may be contained within an optional metallic sleeve, in concrete walls or floors may be firestopped via [C-AJ-3397](#). Only a 2 in. thick section of block is required around the cable bundle and the allowable annular space ranges from 1/2 to 1-1/2 in. One or more metallic pipes, conduits or tubes in concrete assemblies can be addressed with [C-AJ-1785](#). This system covers maximum 12 by 24 in. openings and enjoys L Ratings of less than 1 CFM/sq ft. Finally, [W-L-1628](#) and [W-L-1629](#) provide similar coverage to C-AJ-1785 for multiple metallic penetrants in gypsum wallboard assemblies with equivalent L Rating values to the system for concrete walls and floors. W-L-1629 is suitable for shaft wall assemblies and the opening sizes can be up to 269 sq. in. in both listings. All the new [SpecSeal® Firestop Block](#) systems provide up to a 2 Hr F Rating and are great solutions for firestop applications requiring retrofit capabilities or where access might be limited to one side of an assembly.



Firestop Block Installation Upon Completion of Fire Endurance Testing (C-AJ-4121)

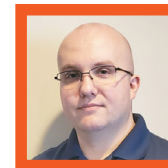
### Max 3" Joint Installs for Finrock Floors!

Joints of up to 3 in. between Finrock Dual Deck assemblies or Dual Deck assemblies to concrete walls can now be firestopped using [SpecSeal® Composite Sheet](#) in conjunction with a steel plate at the underside of the joint. Achieve 2 Hr Assembly Ratings for floor-to-floor applications, [FF-D-1237](#), and floor-to-wall applications, [FW-D-1155](#), for Finrock floor assemblies with SpecSeal® Composite Sheet at the upper slab. Both joint systems are designed to accommodate movement of 50 percent compression or extension from the nominal 3 in. joint width.



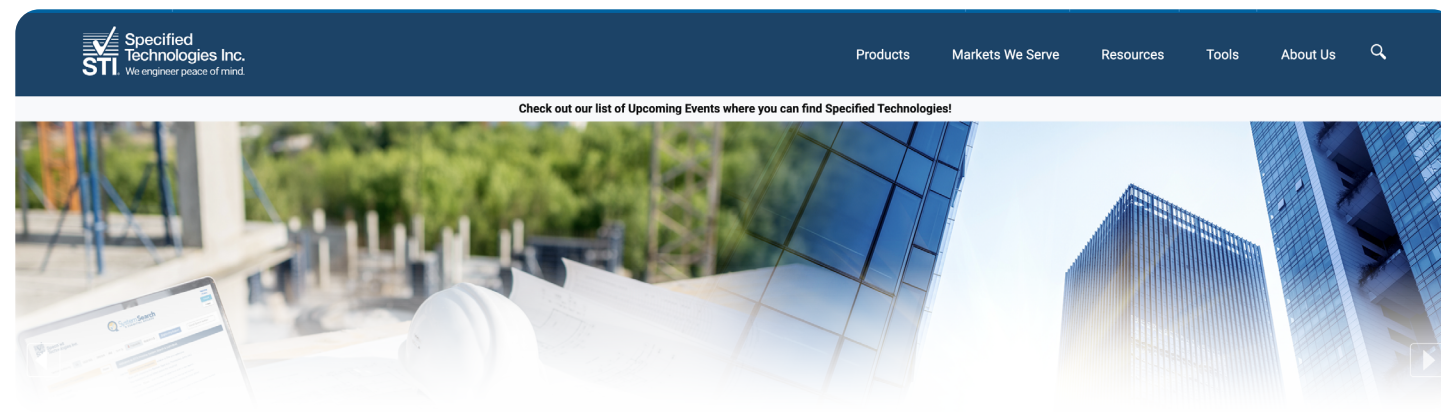
Joint Installation with Composite Sheet for Finrock Floor Assembly (FF-D-1237)

## Digital Update: Winter 2025



**Justin Pine**

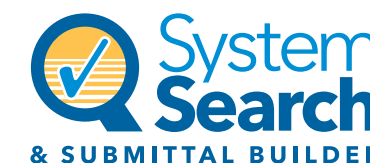
Senior Manager, Software & Services



The long nights and brutally cold days of this year's winter season are finally starting to ramp down here in the Northeast, but our Digital Solutions team is showing no signs of slowing down as we make our way into 2025! Last year saw a new website and major updates to our Firestop Clash Management (FCM), Firestop Locator (FSL), and System Search & Submittal Builder (SS&SB) tools. This year the team is partnering with our Digital Marketing team to enhance and expand our corporate website along with significant updates to AccessSTI and our other web apps.

For our website we've already released an updated and more streamlined navigation menu as well as popularity sort for product searches, allowing you to sort products by real world customer activity in a similar fashion to how our listings are sorted in System Search & Submittal Builder. We also launched our "Back to Basics" series taking a closer look at foundational topics in firestopping and passive fire life safety covering standards, ratings, as well as different technologies used in firestop products.

The most exciting updates we have planned for this year are around AccessSTI Platform and our suite of web apps. We have significant updates planned for the AccessSTI Platform this year that will not only visually make each application more appealing but also introduce new features and enhanced interoperability between STI applications as well as with third parties to better complement and enhance your existing workflow. Expect to hear and experience these updates throughout the year as we push each update live. Check back on our social channels, the [STI NewsStop](#), or our Digital Knowledgebase to find out more about these updates as well as what new features will be available to you once they are live.



## Back to Basics – What is the F-Rating

Specified Technologies Inc. Engineering Services



The F-Rating is the duration measured in hours that an installed firestop system will resist the passage of fire. A firestop system's F-rating results from fire testing a given configuration to an appropriate test standard, with a resulting listing issued by a Nationally Recognized Third-party Testing Laboratory.

In the United States you will commonly see the below standards referenced when determining F-Ratings:

ASTM E814/UL1479 for Penetrations

ASTM E1966/UL2079 for Construction Joints

ASTM E2307 for Perimeter Fire Barriers

ASTM E119/UL723 for Assemblies such as walls, floors, and ceilings

Each of the above-listed test standards utilized the same time temperature curve ensuring consistent fire exposure across methods, while including additional criteria specific to the condition being evaluated. These four standards are the basis determining firestop systems F-Ratings and are referenced in US Building Codes as required when determining what firestop systems are acceptable for use.

## Saluting Keith Sanford: A Distinguished Career

Specified Technologies Inc. Staff

After over 35 dedicated years in the firestop industry, Keith Sanford is set to retire on May 1st, leaving behind a legacy of commitment, leadership, and expertise. As a key figure in building STI's Field Engineering function, Keith's contributions have shaped the team and elevated our impact in the industry. Known for his unwavering professionalism and innovative thinking, Keith has played a vital role in enhancing life safety practices through his role as educator and engineer for the architectural community. Keith has been a prominent source of knowledge, especially as it relates to specifications, testing, and listings.

Keith, your retirement marks the end of an era, and your hard work and commitment have made a lasting difference. Thank you for everything, and best wishes for your next chapter!



## Over 20 Years of Excellence: A Case Study on Long Term Partnership and Diverse Solutions

Specified Technologies Inc. Case Studies



[Brady Housden, CHC, CHFM, CHOP, FDAI](#), was introduced to Specified Technologies, Inc. over twenty years ago, early in his career, when working as a firestop contractor and installer in commercial construction. Throughout his professional career, his relationship with Specified Technologies has continued to evolve. Currently working as a Construction Project Manager in the Midwest, Brady continues to turn to STI for solutions and training.



### Breadth of Products

STI Firestop has delivered a diverse range of firestop, smoke, and sound solutions for almost thirty-five years. STI can be a strategic partner to many across a wide spectrum of markets and industries by providing cost-effective, sustainable solutions.

"The biggest opportunity STI provides is the breadth of products and the ability to have a rated system for the installation," says Housden. "Finding quality products can be challenging; STI makes it easy."

### Retrofit Device

STI is known for its family of EZ Path® Fire Rated Pathway devices. One member of the EZ Path family is the EZ Path Retrofit Device, which brings deficient cable penetrations back into code compliance by installing around overfilled cable sleeves to restore the fire and smoke leakage performance. When asked what his favorite product STI offers, Housden says the Retrofit Device. "With the retrofit device, we could fix many issues in my previous facilities. It's one of those products that makes so much sense as soon as you see it and is an obvious answer to a big problem."

### Firestop Training

In addition to its catalog of products, STI is known for its training offerings. Besides offering onsite training in facilities, STI offers hands-on Firestop Instructional Training (FIT) Level 2 at their Headquarters in Somerville, New Jersey, and also at testing labs like UL and Intertek. "I want to really stress just how beneficial the training that you offer is. The training in New Jersey is excellent and one of the best training offerings I have ever been to," raves Housden. "Seeing first-hand what a burn looks like with my own eyes made it so worth it."

### Conclusion

"Knowing I have STI in my corner as I start a new role is a huge advantage for me," says Housden. While Brady's roles have changed over the years, he credits Specified Technologies for being his professional constant that he knows he can turn to for all of his firestopping, smoke, and sound needs.

**Product Field Shots**



**LCI Intumescent Sealant for Metallic Penetrants**

**Project:** Baylor St. Lukes Hospital – McNair Tower  
**Location:** Houston, TX  
**Contractor:** Lone Star Firestop



**Pillow Installation for Metallic Penetrants**

**Project:** Wellstar Kennestone Hospital  
**Location:** Marietta, GA  
**Contractor:** Georgia Firestop



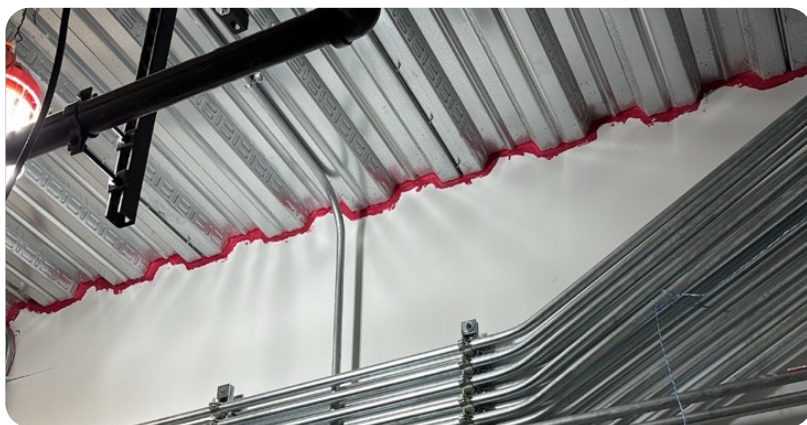
**LCI Intumescent Sealant and RED Wrap Strip Collar for Insulated Pipe**

**Project:** Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital  
**Location:** Tacoma, WA  
**Contractor:** Hudson Bay Insulation



**Composite Sheet Installation for Ductwork**

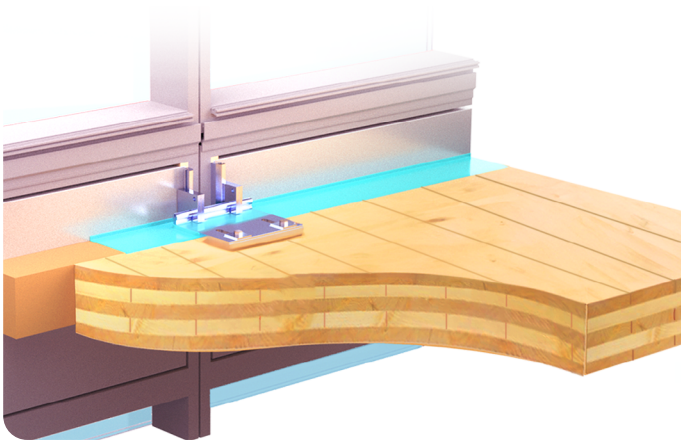
**Project:** Wellstar Kennestone Hospital  
**Location:** Marietta, GA  
**Contractor:** Georgia Firestop



**ES Elastomeric Sealant at Castle Cut Head-of-Wall Joint**

**Project:** Bradley International Airport  
**Location:** Windsor Locks, CT  
**Contractor:** Red Line Drywall

## Upcoming Trade Shows



### International Mass Timber Conference

03/25/25 - 03/27/25, Portland, Oregon  
Booth #215

### BUILD25: AWC's Convention & Expo

03/31/25 - 04/03/25, Charlotte, North Carolina  
Booth #620

### Zak World of Façades Seattle

04/10/25, Seattle, Washington

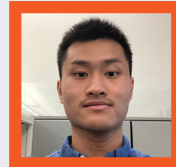
### Sphere 1 Annual Conference

05/13/25 - 05/15/25, Austin, Texas

### AIA '25

06/04/25 - 06/07/25, Boston, Massachusetts  
Booth #841

## Meet the TEAM



### Sky Chen

CAD Operator

#### What is your role at Specified Technologies Inc. and how long have you been here?

I am a CAD Operator in the CAD Services Department. I have been working at STI for 1 year and 11 months.

#### What is one bucket list item of yours?

I would like to attend a front-row New York Knicks game during the playoffs. I have been a fan of the Knicks since I was little, and I think it would be amazing to see them up close, especially since they're doing well now!

#### What project have you worked on in your career that you are most proud to have been a part of?

Before I started in the CAD Services Department, I was an intern at STI, and I had the opportunity to work with Jorge Angulo and his team. There, I worked on the CID201GW project, which I would consider the one I'm most proud of. This was my first internship, so it was my first chance (outside of school) to show everyone what I could do. I had great mentorship and support from others, which helped me make meaningful contributions to the project. Seeing that I was able to lend a hand really helped me break out of my shell and realize that I could make a real impact in this company.

#### What is your favorite part about working in the firestop industry?

My favorite part about working in the firestop industry is knowing that what I'm doing contributes to something important and relevant in the world.

#### What is one fun fact about yourself?

A fun fact about myself is that I love powerlifting in my free time. I have personal goals for my lifts, but for now, here are my personal records: bench - 240 lbs, squats - 235 lbs (a little low for my liking), and deadlifts - 315 lbs.