1 Introduction

1.1 As interest in sustainable development grows, the ready mixed concrete industry must be able to support sustainable development, balancing economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental responsibility. Moving towards a sustainable, environmentally conscious production model not only reduces environmental burdens, but also increases efficiency and places ready mixed concrete plants in a position of industry leadership in the growing green movement. When effectively communicated to consumers, a progressive stance on sustainability will allow the concrete industry and its constituents to remain responsibly competitive.

1.2 The NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification (Certification) program provides a quantitative, performance-based metric, to allow ready mixed concrete producers to demonstrate excellence in sustainable development. The Certification provides ready mixed concrete plant personnel with specific guidance to assess their production practices and implement sustainability strategies that will ultimately lower their overall footprint.

1.3 To certify, plant personnel use the Sustainable Concrete Plant Guidelines1 (Guidelines) to rate a plant’s level of sustainability within different credit categories. Plants can achieve between 0 and 100 points depending on how many sustainability credits are achieved and their level of performance within each credit.

1.4 Plant personnel collect documentation for those credits for which they are claiming points and submit the documentation to NRMCA along with appropriate application forms and fees. NRMCA sends the application and documentation to a third-party auditor who reviews the application and documentation to determine if they meet the criteria described in the Guidelines for all the points being claimed by the plant. If the plant meets the certification criteria NRMCA awards the plant with the appropriate NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification level:

1.4.1 Bronze: 30-49 points
1.4.2 Silver: 50-69 points
1.4.3 Gold: 70-89 points
1.4.4 Platinum: 90-100 points


2 Rating and Certification Process

2.1 Rating a Plant: A concrete producer Rates a concrete plants using the criteria detailed in the Guidelines.

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1 The Sustainable Concrete Plant Guidelines were developed through generous funding from the RMC Research & Education Foundation. The development process was managed by NRMCA.
2.2 **Rater:** A plant Rater, is a responsible person familiar with the plant operations, the Guidelines, and the Certification process. He or she can be a company employee or consultant to the company. A Rater uses the Guidelines to Rate the plant between 0 and 100 based on how many sustainability credits achieved. Sustainability credits and criteria for achieving points within each credit are defined in the Guidelines.

2.3 **Documentation:** The Rater collects Documentation required to demonstrate compliance with the credits and points being claimed. Documentation requirements are defined in the Guidelines.

2.4 **Submittal:** The Rater completes the Certification Submittal Form and Checklists and converts all Documentation to Adobe PDF format. They assemble all the Submittal Forms, Checklists, and Documentation into a single Adobe PDF document. The organization of the Submittal should follow the same order as the Guidelines. The Submittal is sent to NRMCA via e-mail along with the Certification Fee.

2.5 **Review:** When NRMCA receives a Submittal for Review, it logs in the date, Rater, and plant information. It checks the Submittal to determine if it is in the proper format. If the Submittal is in the proper format NRMCA sends the Submittal to an accredited NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification Auditor (Auditor) for third party auditing. If the Submittal is not in the proper format it is returned it to the Rater with instructions to reorganize the Submittal into the proper format. The Rater reformats the submittal and resubmits it to NRMCA for Review.

2.6 **Primary Audit:** The Submittal is Audited by an NRMCA accredited Auditor to determine if the Documentation meets the criteria described in the Guidelines to justify the Rating claimed in the Submittal. The Auditor returns an Audit Evaluation Form to NRMCA. The Audit Evaluation Form provides the Auditor with the opportunity to accept the Documentation or reject the Documentation on a credit by credit basis and adjust the number of points claimed in the Submittal.

2.7 **Audit Evaluation Form:** NRMCA reviews the Audit Evaluation Form returned by the auditor. If the Audit Evaluation Form confirms the Rating claimed by the Rater then NRMCA issues a Certification to the Plant for the appropriate Certification Level. If the Auditor Evaluation Form indicates that some of the Documentation does not meet the criteria of the Guidelines, NRMCA returns the Audit Evaluation Form to the Rater. The Rater has an opportunity to modify the Submittal and return it to NRMCA for a Secondary Audit.

2.8 **Secondary Audit:** NRMCA sends a revised submittal to the Auditor for Second Audit. The Auditor reviews only those credits in which Documentation was deemed not to meet the Guideline criteria from the first submittal. The Auditor returns a revised Auditor Evaluation Form to NRMCA based on the Second Submittal. The revised Audit Evaluation Form is the final Rating for the plant. NRMCA issues a Certification to the Plant for the appropriate Certification Level.

2.9 **Certification Levels:** The NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification (Certification) program certifies individual ready mixed concrete plants for their level of sustainability based on the number of points achieved using the Guidelines. There are four (4) levels of certification based on the number of points achieved:

- 2.9.1 Bronze: 30-49 points
- 2.9.2 Silver: 50-69 points
- 2.9.3 Gold: 70-89 points
- 2.9.4 Platinum: 90-100 points
2.10 **Evaluation Period:** Plants are evaluated using the Guidelines for a recent 12-month period, starting no later than 15 months from the time of Certification application, which is the date the Submittal is received by NRMCA.

2.11 **Certification Period:** The Certification is valid for 2 years starting from the date NRMCA certifies the plant. A plant may recertify at any time during the 2 year period. If the certification period expires, the plant can no longer claim to be an NRMCA Certified Sustainable Concrete Plant.

3 **Rater Qualifications**

3.1 Every NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification Submittal must be completed by a qualified Rater.

3.2 The Rater can be an employee of the company submitting the plant for Certification or can be a consultant to the company submitting the plant for Certification.

3.3 Rater Experience: There is no specific level of experience required to be a Rater. NRMCA recommends that the Rater be familiar with environmental regulations and sustainable manufacturing and operating concepts and strategies used in the ready mixed concrete industry. The Rater should also be familiar with the Guidelines and the Certification process by reading the Certification Policies and Procedures and the Guidelines before undertaking the Rating process.

3.4 Training: Although there is no formal training requirement for Raters, NRMCA recommends that Raters take a course from NRMCA on the Certification process. NRMCA periodically conducts training sessions on the Certification process both in person and online. Visit [www.nrmca.org/sustainability/certification](http://www.nrmca.org/sustainability/certification) for details.

4 **Auditor Qualifications**

4.1 Every Certification Submittal will be audited by a third party Auditor who is neither an employee of NRMCA nor an employee of the concrete producer submitting the plant for Certification nor an employee of another concrete company, material supplier, or equipment supplier for the ready mixed concrete industry. The name of the Auditor for the plant being audited will not be revealed to the Certification applicant. The Auditor will meet the Certification Auditor Qualifications.

4.2 Auditors must complete and submit a Certification Auditor Application Form and meet the following qualifications.

4.3 Independent Third Party: Auditor must be an independent third party. The auditor must not be an employee of NRMCA, nor an employee of the company they are auditing, nor an employee of a competing concrete producer. Auditors may consult for companies who are in the process of submitting a plant for Certification but cannot Audit a plant for which they provided consulting services related to the Certification Application being audited.

4.4 Auditor Education and Experience:

4.4.1 Option 1: Auditors must:

4.4.1.1 Be a Registered Professional Engineer practicing in a relevant field.

4.4.1.2 Be an NRMCA Certified Environmental Professional

4.4.1.3 Have completed a 2-hour seminar on the NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification program.
4.4.2 Option 2: Auditor must:
   4.4.2.1 Possess a 4-year degree in engineering, construction, science or other relevant field.
   4.4.2.2 Have 2 years of experience in environmental management in the ready mixed concrete industry
   4.4.2.3 Be an NRMCA Certified Environmental Professional
   4.4.2.4 Have completed a 2-hour seminar on the NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification program.

4.4.3 Option 3: Auditor must:
   4.4.3.1 Possess a minimum of 5 years experience in environmental management in the ready mixed concrete industry
   4.4.3.2 Be an NRMCA Certified Environmental Professional
   4.4.3.3 Have completed a 2-hour seminar on the NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification program.

5 Submittal Details and Organization

5.1 Each Submittal must contain the following information in the following order
   5.1.1 Certification Submittal Form
   5.1.2 Certification Checklist
   5.1.3 Guideline Checklist
   5.1.4 Credit Documentation (for each credit for which the Rater is claiming points in the same order as the Guidelines)
      5.1.4.1 Credit Title Page
      5.1.4.2 Credit Calculations (if appropriate)
      5.1.4.3 Credit Documentation

6 Certification Fee

6.1 Each Submittal must be accompanied by a Submittal Fee. See the Certification Submittal Form for fee schedule and method of payment.

6.2 This fee covers the cost of NRMCA review, Auditor fees, and Certification administration.

7 Certification Recognition

7.1 Plants that are certified in the NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant Certification Program will be recognized by NRMCA as follows:
   7.1.1 Will be listed as an NRMCA Certified Sustainable Concrete Plant at the appropriate Certification Level on the NRMCA website.
   7.1.2 Will be provided with a certificate suitable for framing that will recognize the plant as NRMCA Certified Sustainable Concrete Plant at the appropriate Certification Level.
   7.1.3 Certified plants have the right to advertise themselves as an NRMCA Sustainable Concrete Plant at the appropriate certification level (Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum) as long as they maintain certification.
8 Certification Suspension or Revocation

8.1 A plant’s Certification may be suspended or revoked if it is discovered during the auditing period or during the certification period that the information provided in the submittal no longer meets the certification criteria or violates the Certification Policies and Procedures.

8.2 NRMCA will notify the Rater (person who submitted the plant for Certification) of any issues with the submittal information and will suspend and/or revoke Certification until the documentation is corrected.

8.3 The Rater can submit revised documentation that would bring the plant back into compliance with the Certification criteria or Certification Policies and Procedures at which point, NRMCA will reinstate Certification.