



## OUR VALUE-ADDED *blog*

### Is the Lowest Bid *Really* the Best Bid When Hiring a Paint Fireproofing Company?

In commercial/industrial construction, every dollar matters – but so does every inspection, every schedule milestone, and every trade that depends on rigid timetables. When it comes to paint fireproofing, choosing the lowest bid can feel like a win in the moment, but it's often the decision that costs a general contractor the most in the long run.

**Fireproofing isn't a commodity that is solely based on price.** It's a technical, inspection-driven trade where experience, equipment, and quality control directly determine whether your project stays on track. And that's exactly why *the lowest bid is rarely the best bid.*

#### 1. Low Bids Often Hide Missing Scope

Fireproofing proposals can look straightforward, but the real complexity lives in the details:

- UL design requirements
- Substrate preparation
- Mobilizations and access
- Thickness tolerances
- Patching and touch-ups
- Environmental conditions

A contractor who submits a bargain-basement number is often low because they left something out. Those missing items don't disappear – they reappear later as change orders, delays, and disputes.

#### 2. Fireproofing Requires Certified Applicators and Specialized Equipment

Cementitious and intumescent systems must be applied exactly as the manufacturer specifies. That means:

- Trained, certified applicators
- Proper pumps and spray rigs
- Controlled application conditions
- Accurate wet-film and dry-film measurements

A low bidder may not have the manpower, equipment, or experience to meet these standards. And when fireproofing is done incorrectly, it's not just a cosmetic issue – it's a life-safety failure.

#### 3. Failed Inspections Cost Far More Than a Higher Bid

Every GC knows the pain of a failed fireproofing inspection:

- Rework
- Remobilization
- Lost time for other trades
- Schedule compression
- Frustrated owners

A contractor with a proven record of first-pass inspections is worth far more than a contractor who "won" the job by cutting corners.

#### **4. Low Bidders Often Can't Keep Up With the Schedule**

Fireproofing is frequently on the critical path. A company that underbids may not have:

- Enough applicators to keep pace with steel delivery
- Backup equipment if a pump goes down
- The ability to work extended hours
- The capacity to handle large or fast-track projects

A low number on bid day can quickly turn into a high-stress problem when the schedule starts slipping.

#### **5. Quality Fireproofing Protects the GC's Reputation**

Owners don't blame the fireproofing subcontractor — they blame the general contractor. When fireproofing is late, sloppy, or fails inspection, it reflects directly on the GC's professionalism and project management.

Choosing a reputable fireproofing partner is an investment in:

- Smooth inspections
- Predictable scheduling
- Fewer headaches
- A stronger relationship with the owner

#### **So, What Is the Best Bid?**

The best bid is the one that delivers value, not just a low number. Look for a fireproofing contractor who offers:

- Complete, transparent scope
- Certified and experienced applicators
- Reliable equipment and manpower
- A track record of passing inspections the first time
- Clear communication with the GC and other trades
- No-surprise pricing

**A slightly higher bid from a qualified fireproofing company almost always saves money — and stress — over the life of the project.**