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What a General Contractor Should Look for When Selecting a Cementitious & Intumescent Paint Fireproofing Company

Fireproofing is one of those scopes that rarely gets attention until something goes wrong. Yet for general contractors, choosing the right cementitious and intumescent paint fireproofing partner is essential for staying on schedule, passing inspections, and protecting the long-term performance of the structure. Not all fireproofing contractors operate at the same level, and the differences often show up when it's too late to fix them cheaply.

Contractors who want predictable results should evaluate fireproofing partners with the same scrutiny they apply to structural steel, concrete, or MEP trades. These are the qualities that separate a reliable fireproofing company from a risky one.

1. Proven Expertise in Both Cementitious and Intumescent Systems

Fireproofing isn't a one-size-fits-all trade. Cementitious and intumescent paint fireproofing each have their own application methods, curing requirements, thickness standards, and inspection criteria. A qualified fireproofing company should demonstrate:

- Experience across a wide range of UL designs
- Knowledge of substrate preparation requirements
- Familiarity with manufacturer specifications
- Ability to recommend the right system for the project's environment, budget, and aesthetic needs

A well-rounded contractor should have the expertise—and be fully experienced—in both systems so they can be seamlessly integrated into a project that requires both fireproofing methods.

2. Manufacturer Certifications and Product Training

Fireproofing materials are engineered systems. Manufacturers require certified applicators to ensure their products perform as tested. A reputable fireproofing company should maintain:

- Current manufacturer certifications
- Documented training for all applicators
- Strong relationships with technical reps

This ensures the installation meets the fire rating requirements and qualifies for manufacturer warranties.

3. A Track Record of Passing Inspections the First Time

One of the biggest pain points for general contractors is failed inspections. Delays cascade quickly, especially when fireproofing is on the critical path. A dependable fireproofing partner should have:

- A documented history of first-pass inspection approvals
- In-house quality control processes
- Familiarity with local inspectors and AHJs
- The ability to provide accurate wet-film and dry-film thickness measurements
- A company that consistently passes inspections protects your schedule and your reputation

4. Strong Project Management and Communication

Fireproofing interacts with multiple trades – steel erectors, painters, mechanical contractors, and more. Miscommunication leads to access issues, out-of-sequence work, and unnecessary mobilizations. Look for a fireproofing company that offers:

- Clear scheduling and manpower planning
- Daily communication with the GC's superintendent
- Rapid response to field changes
- Detailed documentation and reporting
- A fireproofing partner who communicates well keeps the job moving smoothly.

5. Safety Culture and Compliance

Fireproofing involves equipment, elevated work, and materials that require proper handling. A professional fireproofing company should demonstrate:

- A strong safety program and training
- Compliance with OSHA standards
- Proper PPE and equipment maintenance
- A clean safety record

Safety isn't optional – it's a reflection of professionalism and reliability.

6. Capacity, Manpower & Equipment to Meet the Schedule

Fireproofing is often one of the last trades to touch the steel before other trades mobilize. Delays here can bottleneck the entire project. A qualified fireproofing company should have:

- Sufficient manpower to scale with project demands
- Well-maintained pumps, sprayers, and mixing equipment
- Backup equipment to avoid downtime
- The ability to work extended hours when needed

A company with limited resources can quickly become a scheduling liability.

7. Transparent Pricing and Accurate Takeoffs

Fireproofing bids can vary widely, and low numbers often hide missing scope or unrealistic production rates. A trustworthy fireproofing contractor provides:

- Detailed Scope of Work (SOW)
- Clear UL design assumptions
- Transparent pricing for mobilizations, prep work, and patching
- Realistic production expectations

This protects the GC from change orders and budget surprises.

8. Reputation and References

A company's past performance is the best predictor of future results. Before awarding the contract, a GC should review:

- References from recent projects
- Testimonials from other general contractors
- The company's portfolio of completed work
- Their standing with manufacturers and inspectors

A fireproofing partner with a strong reputation brings confidence to the entire project team.

Final Thoughts

Selecting the right cementitious and intumescent paint fireproofing company isn't just about price – it's about reliability, expertise, and the ability to deliver work that passes inspection and keeps the project on track. When a GC chooses a partner who understands the technical demands of fireproofing and communicates effectively, the entire project benefits.