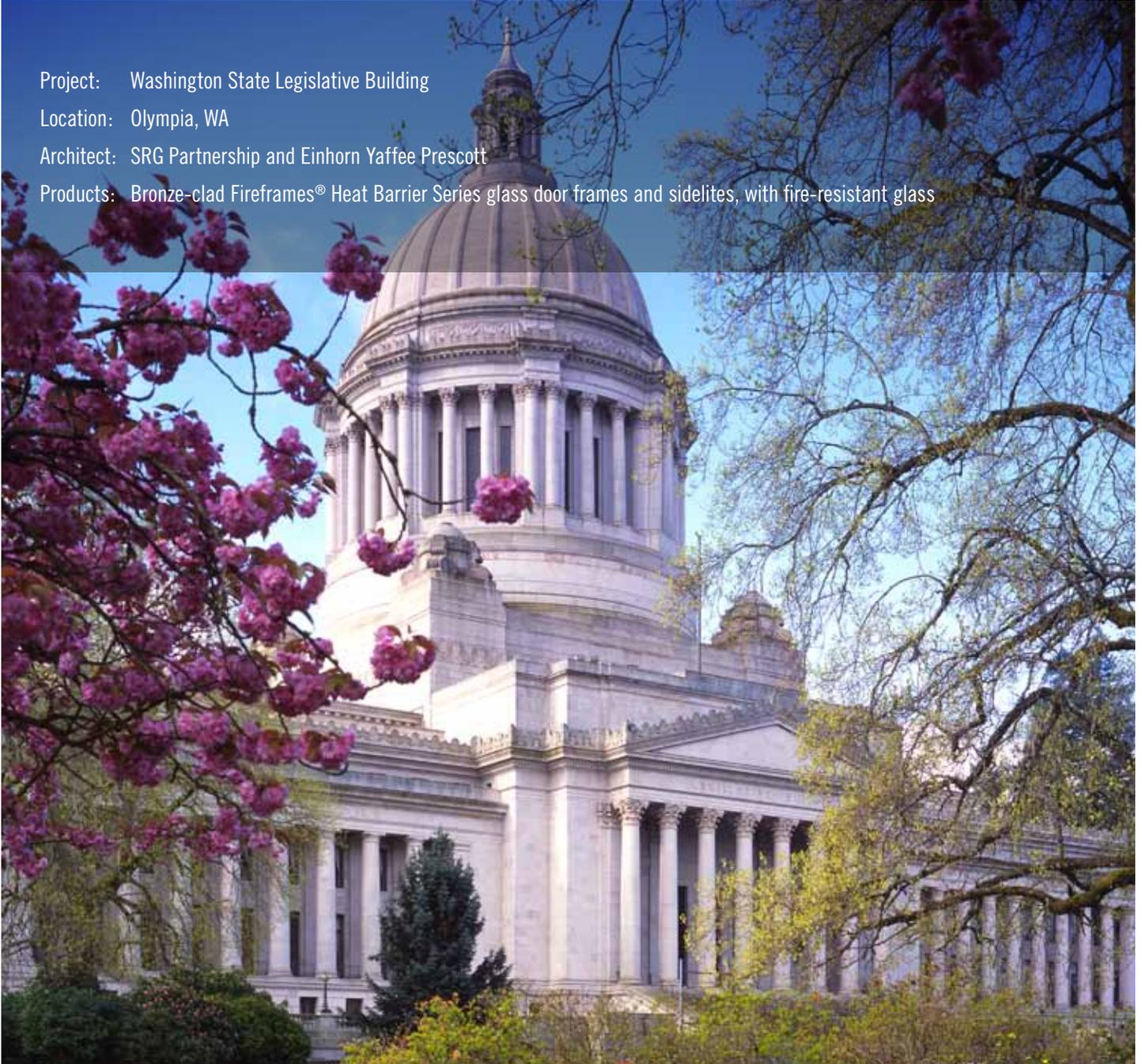


Project: Washington State Legislative Building

Location: Olympia, WA

Architect: SRG Partnership and Einhorn Yaffee Prescott

Products: Bronze-clad Fireframes® Heat Barrier Series glass door frames and sidelites, with fire-resistant glass



In the early 1920s, the State of Washington built a magnificent new legislative building to serve as a practical and aesthetic civic focal point for the state capitol campus. The building – reminiscent of the U.S. Capitol – was designed in a mixture of Roman, Greek and neo-Classical styles. Following a magnitude 6.8 earthquake in 2001, the brick and stone structure was in danger of collapsing.

To extend the life of the building for another 50 years, the state undertook a renovation to update and reinforce the structure, and to install new heating, cooling, plumbing and fire protection systems. A key challenge faced by the architects – SRG Partnership and Einhorn Yaffee Prescott – was to accomplish the structural and safety upgrades in a way that preserved the historic elegance of the popular building.

Among the many design challenges inherent with the upgrade was a code requirement to provide fire-rated barriers in all stairwells. In many similar applications, heavy steel doors with small wired-glass windows are used to provide the necessary fire protection. While practical for helping stop or slow the spread of flames and smoke, such installations create an industrial or institutional feel. These products would not have met the project's goal to retain the character and styling of the classic building, especially since a number of the stairwells are in very visible locations.

To provide light and a sense of openness in the stairwells, while meeting the requirements for fire safety, the architects selected Fireframes® Heat Barrier Series glass doorframes and sidelights, with fire-resistant glass. Fireframes – available from Technical Glass Products (TGP) – are fire-rated for two hours, offer a narrow steel profile and can accommodate large individual panes of fire-resistant glass. In addition to their practicality, the bronze-clad Fireframes used in the legislative building are a natural extension of other furnishings and fixtures in the building and complement its historic architecture.

Fireframes can be finished to match virtually any desired color scheme. The durability of the frames also ensures low maintenance. Interlocking door profiles provide a tight seal against flames and smoke. Fireframes can be manufactured in a range of sizes and shapes – the legislative building installation includes both rectangular and arched doorways. “Fire-resistant framing and glass doesn’t have to look bulky and unappealing,” says Jerry Razwick, president of TGP. “Products like Fireframes allow architects great design flexibility, bringing visibility and natural light into spaces that were once required to be protected behind thick walls and doors.”

For their overall approach to rehabilitating the legislative building and preserving its historic character, the architect team was presented a 2006 National Honor Award by the American Institute of Architects (AIA). The selection jury commented that the project was “an ingenious approach to accommodate new systems.”

For more information on Fireframes Heat Barrier Series, along with TGP's other specialty glass and framing, visit Technical Glass Products online at www.fireglass.com.

