



## ***Outdoor-Indoor Transmission Class Window Ratings***

Our clients may have noticed a subtle change recently in our recommendations for controlling interior noise levels. We have switched from the sound transmission class (STC) rating system for windows and doors to the *outdoor-indoor transmission class (OITC) system*. It's our belief that this alternative system will benefit our clients by reducing confusion, simplifying their purchasing process and saving them money.

As *Sound Advice* readers may remember, we have published articles highlighting the pitfalls of using STC for controlling transportation noise. Logic would dictate that the higher a window's STC rating, the better it should be at reducing traffic noise. But often, this is not the case. Why? Because the STC was developed to control noise for speech, not planes, trains and automobiles, and everyone recognizes that speech is quite different from the low-frequency roar of traffic or the high-pitched whine of a jet engine. Often, recommendations for an STC rating led to confusion, and as a result, developers may have installed windows that don't provide the noise reduction required by code.

The good news is that OITC was specifically developed to address transportation noise. As a general rule, an increase in OITC means a corresponding decrease in interior noise level (although OITC isn't perfect, and there are still some exceptions.)

So how does this help our clients? Because of the uncertainties involved in using STC, in the past we have had to specify not only an STC rating, but also a specific manufacturer and model number for each type of window. This could tie the client's hands and deny them the opportunity to get competitive bids from different suppliers, or could require the client's patience while we tracked down the STC test reports for a different manufacturer and analyzed their data.

With OITC, we can confidently recommend a rating knowing the interior noise standard will be achieved no matter which manufacturer or type of window construction is selected by the client, as long as the recommended OITC rating is provided. Now the client is free to bid the project to as many suppliers as desired, without any confusion. How do we think you'll respond to this good news? With "Oh, Isn't That Clever!" of course!