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MASONRY

The Voice of the Masonry Industry
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The Sustainability of Masonry

INSIDE

BIA's Third-party
Certifications

Sustainable Block

Bricklayer's Tools

Blok-Flash® Case Study



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Mason Finds Win-Win Solution for CVS Store

Units themselves can be easily transformed into raw materials for new units or aggregates for other purposes.

- **Aesthetics.** The variety of shapes, colors, textures and patterns available in concrete masonry products provide innovative and inviting structures, resulting in attractive communities.

These attributes are well recognized, but need to be framed into the context of sustainability.

Sell ourselves

NOTHING REALLY SELLS ITSELF, right? To reframe the picture of sustainability will take some work on the part of the masonry industry. While the masonry industry often has been referred to as "fragmented," we have the opportunity to approach much of the sustainability initiative together.

This is where Vision 2020 comes in. The National Concrete Masonry Association and the Mason Contractors Association of America have united to establish a new vision to promote the role masonry products can have in helping to achieve sustainable communities. We are inviting other national masonry organizations to join us in this effort. Since individual communities have the power to influence their own destinies, much of the message delivery will have to be implemented at the local level. Therefore, many regional masonry promotion groups are joining in the effort to provide community leaders and planners with strategies intended to achieve environmentally friendly neighborhoods that attract residents and development. Masonry communities will improve property values, increase tax revenues, and benefit townships for generations.

Decision-makers come in many forms, be they town officials, school boards, architects or government agencies. The challenge is ours to demonstrate to them that the attributes that masonry has long possessed are what have been needed all along to achieve sustainable solutions. The key to our success will be in selling masonry as a *system*, and not just a product.

Influence standards

WANT FURTHER EVIDENCE that the path to sustainable construction is no longer an obvious contiguous path? Consider the plethora of organizations promulgating standards and guides associated with providing guidance or requirements for

Joe Montalvo, who owns Montalvo's Masonry, in Ft. Worth, Texas, was understandably pleased when he won the masonry bid for a new CVS Pharmacy in Midwest City, Okla. By some measures, CVS is the nation's largest chain of retail pharmacies.

The architects, Carter & Burgess of Ft. Worth (later acquired by Jacobs Engineering Group Inc.), had specified a reddish-colored, split-face, eight-inch CMU for much of the new store's single-wythe exterior walls.

The specified flashing method was to be "step-flashing." In step-flashing, the flashed course requires two wythes of half-width block, allowing the flashing membrane to be installed between them in a "Z" configuration.

Step-flashing often is used for flashing single-wythe CMU. But Montalvo knew it would eat up massive amounts of time and labor.

Eager to save time, Montalvo discussed alternatives with the architect. What if he solid-grouted the first course of eight-inch block, he asked, and inserted cotton rope for drainage? The architect nixed that idea. Flashing had to be installed for more reliable moisture control and greater wall longevity.

Resigned to using the tedious step-flashing, Montalvo got ready to order the two sizes of architectural block.

But first, he attended a product demonstration, held at Builders Equipment & Supply in Ft. Worth. A representative from Mortar Net USA in Burns Harbor, Ind., gave demos of two of the company's products. One of them was its newly redesigned CMU-flashing system, Blok-Flash.

A CMU-flashing system? Montalvo's ears perked up.

The Blok-Flash system, he learned, featured lightweight, high-density polyethylene pans that simply could be dropped onto each block of the first above-grade course, and then mortared in place. The pans would intercept moisture that flowed down through the vertical cores, and then expel it to the building's exterior through built-in Weep Spouts.

He was especially happy, though, to hear that Blok-Flash eliminated the need for multiple sizes of architectural block. This would not only help him save time, but also it would avoid the problem of getting a bad color match between the two lots. Moreover, the product could be used wherever flashing was required — above windows, doorways, bond beams, etc. Its built-in Weep Spout also made a separate drip-edge unnecessary.

It made pea-gravel unnecessary, too. The system included feather-light rectangles of tough, polyester-mesh fabric (Drainage Mattes) that could be slipped quickly into cores of the next course of block above the Blok-Flash, to direct moisture to the built-in weeps and protect them from falling mortar.

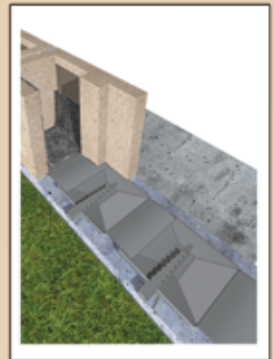
The manufacturer's rep asserted that using Blok-Flash not only would save in set-up and material costs, but also could save 50 percent or more in labor costs versus step-flashing.

After the demonstration, Montalvo knew this was the answer he'd been looking for. But would it fly with the architect?

Another lucky break awaited him. "I submitted a substitution request to the general contractor and the architect," he says, "and it was immediately approved." Apparently, the CVS architects were already familiar with Blok-Flash, and may have been moving toward it for future stores.

On the job site, Montalvo's workers needed little training to pick up the new system. The Blok-Flash went in swiftly, and the men found that tucking Drainage Mattes into the next course of block was far faster than hauling and pouring heavy pea-gravel.

As promised, the savings added up at equal speed. "There's no question it saved time and money," Montalvo said. "It was the best thing since sliced bread!"



Blok-Flash System

evaluating decisions. To name a few, if only in acronym speak: ASTM, ASHRAE, IGCC, SSBCEI, NAHB, GBI, etc. Many of the standards created by these organizations are competing for the opportunity to influence design and construction decisions. But, all have the possibility of becoming relevant, and the potential to alter the fate of the masonry industry.

We have long recognized the impact that material standards, design methods, and building codes can have in creating competitive advantages and disadvantages. We need to realize that the orga-

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