

GUIDELINE

Free monthly update on building issues prepared by BRANZ Ltd and funded by the Building Research Levy



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Brick veneer cavities – their function

Initial findings from BRANZ research into drying rates for water that gets behind wall claddings has shown quite clearly that for brick veneer claddings the movement of air behind the cladding, together with positive drainage down the back of the cladding, is critical to the cladding performance.

Brick veneer is a porous cladding – it readily allows water through the bricks and the mortar joints – and water running down the back face of the brick can occur quite quickly when the veneer is subject to an E2/VM1 test. Windows inserted into brick veneer are not sealed to the bricks, and water will pass through this junction. That is why jamb and sill back flashings are an integral part of detailing.

The accepted practice of constructing a brick veneer cladding with a cavity of not less than 40 mm, drainage slots along the bottom of the wall, and the positive ventilation provided by the open perpend along the top and bottom of the veneer, recognises the fact that water will be present and it must be allowed to drain and dry.

Designers, you need to do your home work

BRANZ has spent considerable time and effort providing information for designers on the recently-revised energy efficiency requirements of the Building Code. There have been seminars, books, Build articles and help pages on our website, but we are still getting calls from designers who do not have copies of the documents that are required to determine code compliance.

When calling the BRANZ Helpline you need to have copies of the relevant documents (NZS 4218:2004, H1/AS1 third edition and the BRANZ House Insulation Guide third edition) or we will not be able to assist. We expect you to have attempted to work out the requirements yourself before calling us – help is also available on the H1 support page on www.branz.co.nz.

Importance of record-keeping for builders

We published the following article in Guideline in 1997 and recent calls suggest that builders have not taken this very important message on board.

BRANZ receives dozens of calls from contractors called back to correct some apparent fault allegedly caused by their actions during construction. Many call-backs relate to shrinkage and movement of timber framing, and a common question is - "what was the moisture content at time of lining-out?" Similarly, a frequent question is - "was there a damp-proof membrane (DPM) under the concrete slab and was the reinforcing properly supported?" The answers to these basic questions should be easy to supply and could prevent hours of expensive argument or even court action. However, many contractors fail to insure themselves against litigation by not keeping adequate site records. A simple site diary and a few photographs taken at the appropriate time can save hundreds of dollars!

Design tools

There are many web-based design tools available, but users need to be aware that they may not be recognised in Building Code compliance documents. Those that originate from overseas may not apply to New Zealand conditions or construction methods (for example, the units used may be imperial – such as American insulation values – or the timber grades may not be appropriate for New Zealand).

For H1, the compliance documents specifically identify the paths that are suitable for showing compliance with the clause. If using a tool that is not listed, designers must be satisfied that the result achieved does in fact meet the specific Code performance requirements and submit it as an Alternative Solution.

Slab edge details

NZS 3604 allows slab-on-ground floors for single-storey buildings that are not supported by or tied to the foundation wall

The slab edge insulation details published in Build 100 (June/July 07, pages 32 and 33) were developed in consultation with BRANZ's engineers to meet the design requirements of NZS 3604 or the relevant concrete standards.

Asbestos claddings

Any work which involves the drilling of asbestos cement sheet and plank claddings and subsequent filling and sanding of those holes creates potentially hazardous dust. In our view, that is notifiable work and must be carried out by a specialist contractor. It should not be carried out by just any building contractor or DIY person.

New voice

Callers to the BRANZ Helpline may get to hear a new voice on the end of the phone. Tom Edhouse, a very experienced builder, has joined the BRANZ Helpline team.

BRANZ Seminars 2008

Windows & Flooring

Registrations are now open for this seminar prepared for architects and designers. It will cover:

1. **Flooring Selection** – using specific situations we will work through the application of selection factors to make decisions on the most appropriate forms of floor covering.
2. **Window Selection** – bringing together selection criteria such as relevant regulations, function, performance, materials and aesthetics, this section of the seminar will work through exercises using sample situations to make window selection decisions.

Venues and dates for the 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm seminar are July 21st Dunedin; 22nd Christchurch; 23rd Auckland; 24th Hamilton, and 25th Wellington.

Visit our website for more details and to register online – www.branz.co.nz (click on Seminars).

BRANZ Webstreaming Viewing Requirements

To assist potential viewers, we would like to offer the following information:

Browser – The videos presented are currently only able to be viewed on Internet Explorer 6 or above. We are working with the video producers to allow viewing on other browsers, such as Firefox and Safari, but this is not expected until later this year.

System Requirements for best viewing – Mediasite recommends the following system requirements for the best viewing experience with Mediasite Viewer:

- Microsoft Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows 2003 or Macintosh OSX
- Display resolution of 800 x 600 pixels or greater
- Windows-compatible sound card
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 SP1
- Windows Media Player 9.0
- Broadband Internet connection (256 kbps & above preferred, however connection speeds down to 33 kbps are supported)

Enquiries: Should you have any enquiries regarding the viewing of the webstreaming site, either call Ian Balfour (04) 237 1179 or email : seminarregistrations@branz.co.nz

For technical queries arising out of the presentation, call the Helpline on 0800 80 80 85.



Do you want to receive Guideline by email? Just send your email address to Natasha Breen at natashabreen@branz.co.nz with Guideline in the subject line, or you can download it free at www.branz.co.nz