



The truth about “conventional block” construction That most builders don’t want revealed

BACKGROUND:

Please do not assume that building with standard block construction is the best, most affordable and safest way to build. Mostly everyone accepts standard block construction because they do not understand that there are alternatives that make more sense. Additionally, the public does not understand how block construction received acceptance in American construction market in the first place. With the massive communication available on educational TV programs like HGTV, History Channel, Public TV stations and countless Home Improvement programs, public awareness is at an all time high to say the least. The general public is becoming increasingly aware that the medical and pharmaceutical industry’s best interest, is keeping you sick not making you well. This attitude is driven from greed not compassion. Likewise, builder’s best interest is their checkbook balance, not building their customers better and safer homes. Builders use the ignorance of the public to further their plight for financial gain and simultaneously placing their customers in harms way with unsafe construction and energy inefficient homes. A builder who brags that “he build within code” is not doing anyone justice.

Most Builders have a greater incentive to protect their profits rather than offering consumers better choices. The irony is that building with a solid concrete (100% concrete) system such as Omnicrete Patented wall system, homeowners enjoys benefits such as energy efficiency (over 75% savings), fire, hurricane, tornado, mold and moisture resistance far beyond that of the sub-par standard block construction. Notwithstanding the fact that a minimum of 50% premium savings on hazard insurance premiums and maintenance near zero adds to the many benefits of building with Omnicrete. And here is the part that extends far beyond understanding; it costs less to build with Omnicrete after factoring in the massive energy savings. Moreover, when put against the forces of nature, block construction has failed over and over again.

THE PERCEPTION:

My question is; why would anyone feel safe in a block home? The answer is perception. People hear the word concrete block and they feel safe because the term “concrete” sounds hard, strong and protective.

THE DECEPTION:

What gives block its strength is Portland cement. However other ingredients are added such as heavy weight aggregates like sand, lime, gravel and marble chips as well as light weight aggregates such as expanded clay. The light weight aggregates do nothing but give the block mass and a lighter weight but decrease the effective strength of the block itself. Ingredients are



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mixed for 7 minutes and vibrated in their molds for 7 minutes and then baked in a Kiln for 24 hours at 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Even though ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) specifications define a solid concrete block as having a core area not more than 25 percent of the gross cross-sectional area, most block manufacturers enlarge the hollow part of the block to between 40% to 50% of the block area. So when you consider the “filler” that is used to give the solid part of the block mass and consider that part of the block is only 50% of the block mass, most of the structural component of the block is all but lost. Also, when assembled on the job site 3/8 inches of mortar is placed between the blocks, which compounds the weakness of the system. When mortar is too thick the structure becomes only as strong as the joints between the blocks.

WHAT IS DONE TO ADJUST FOR THE WEAK BLOCK?

In short, the block wall is very structurally unreliable and that is why steel and solid concrete must be poured in the hollow core at the corners of buildings and next to all door and window openings to pick up enough strength to become a little safer and structural.

MORE DECEPTION:

After hurricane Andrew in 1992, Politician’s demanded answers as to why block buildings failed structural capabilities. All systems from that point forward were to be missile tested to meet a 100 MPH impact test. A 2 x 4 was required to be shot at every type of wall and the wall was to have resisted up to a 100 mph impact without the object going through the wall. Block systems failed even at 25 miles per hour impact. Immediately, the block lobbyist began their descent on the Politician’s and demanded that the block system be “grandfathered” in the building code. They got their way and that is why you never hear about missile impact test results done on block walls. Alternative systems always brag on their web sites about the results of their missile impact tests but no one is smart enough or even cares enough to ask builders about block impact tests. Most builders wouldn’t even know what a missile impact even is. Try it; ask a builder.

Written by; Len Terry, CEO / Patent Holder