

The Masonry Society

Sustainability E-News

Looking Ahead

May 15, 2020

Volume 12, Number 9

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From The Editor

The current pandemic has created damage and distress for society on many levels, from loss of life and health to loss of employment and income. And in so many cases, the damage is greatest to disadvantaged communities. This crisis has highlighted the many inequities in our global world. My personal hope is that as we begin to consider our next steps forward, governments and societies can rise above political discord to find creative solutions that value the lives of all and the health of our planet. The articles below offer ideas for a new path forward, which envisions a more resilient society and environment. As one of the writers notes, we have an unasked for, rare opportunity for a re-set. I urge you and your firm to look beyond a return to 'business-as-usual' to a move toward better business and better society.

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GREEN BUILDING NEWS

In our current Covid-19 world, much has changed. How we approach the future in light of sustainability and resiliency is the subject of the first two articles below. ~Tina

Global mayors plan for a brighter post-pandemic future

TRAFFIC TECHNOLOGY TODAY

Mayors from around the world who are part of the C40 climate leadership group are pledging to work toward a more sustainable future as their cities recover from the coronavirus pandemic. The mayors agreed to take [concrete steps that address climate change and health factors](#) as they press for stimulus packages and interventions to transition to a lower-carbon, more economically just future. [Read more.](#)

The consequences of COVID-19 for the decade ahead

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The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) has released an issue brief analyzing the systemic vulnerabilities being exposed by COVID-19 and how the crisis could shape the next decade through its interaction with existing demographic, political and cultural divides as well as by accelerating existing trends. In addition, they looked at some lessons from the 2008-9 financial crisis responses to show how COVID-19 responses could affect the next 10 years and beyond. To read more about the various ways in which business can support efforts to build back better, [click here](#).

Guide to building energy performance

ASTM STANDARDIZATION NEWS

Building energy efficiency has become an important factor in commercial real estate transactions. A new guide helps assess efficiency and estimate upgrade costs. Improving the energy efficiency of commercial buildings — from office towers to shopping malls, multifamily dwellings to warehouses — presents unique challenges. One of the biggest challenges lies in the inefficient systems and equipment found in older structures that will continue to be occupied for decades to come. These structures make up the vast majority of the commercial real estate inventory around the world. Clearly, improving the energy usage profiles of older buildings is a worthwhile objective. However, part of the challenge in achieving this goal is that, until fairly recently, buyers and sellers of commercial properties haven't given much thought to energy consumption. The members of the committee on environmental assessment, risk management, and corrective action (E50) hope their new guide for building energy performance and improvement evaluation in the assessment of property condition (E3224) will change this dynamic.

[Read more](#).

CODES and STANDARDS NEWS

While this article is not related to masonry, but it does discuss a common problem: unintended consequences of adding insulation to an existing assembly. In this article, it's the roof assembly, but similar issues can arise when adding insulation to existing walls. A new ASTM standard aims to address the concerns, at least in the case of roofs. ~Tina

Roof assembly changes

ASTM STANDARDIZATION NEWS

A proposed standard (WK70955) should help users evaluate potential impacts of changes to the thermal and moisture properties of roof assemblies and the conditioning of space below roof decks. "Energy conservation is a growing concern for existing buildings, whether constructed a few years ago or a historically significant structure. Many of these buildings were originally constructed with uninsulated and unconditioned attics and roofs, but changing the roof assembly without understanding how the existing assembly operates can have major consequences to the structure," says ASTM member Rex Cyphers, a consulting engineer with WDP & Associates. Without a proper evaluation, changes could have serious negative impacts on the integrity of the existing roof assembly or the supporting structure as well as creating condensation and moisture related issues. To learn more or get involved in the development of this standard, [click here](#).

GREEN PRODUCT NEWS

The first article below discusses standards for a relatively unknown material - hempcrete - a product that is an *insulating* material. Despite its name, it is not a replacement for concrete or concrete block. Instead it can be used as insulation in a masonry wall. Read more

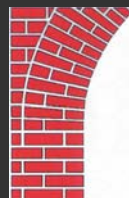
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about the efforts to standardize its performance in the link below.
~Tina

Building with hempcrete

ASTM STANDARDIZATION NEWS

Durable and sustainable, hempcrete has appeared in a range of historical structures over the centuries, perhaps most notably in India's sixth century temple complex, the Ellora Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its use in the 1986 restoration of Maison de la Turque in Nugent-sur-Seine, France spurred a renewed interest in hempcrete in that country. It has since made its way into contemporary residential renovations and construction in Europe, Australia, and North America. Cast into blocks or panels, hempcrete finds its way into walls, floors, ceilings, and roof, as an *insulative*, rather than structural, substance. "The cellulosic makeup of hempcrete is very porous and spongy, allowing moisture to move through, passively regulating humidity and temperature. Its vapor permeability is unmatched," said Joy Beckerman, president of the Hemp Industries Association and principal of Hemp Ace International, in [this article](#). And though some form of hempcrete has existed for centuries, standards for it have not. Developing these standards is the work of ASTM International's subcommittee on industrial hemp (D37.07).

Progressive Planet develops alternative to fly ash

PROACTIVE INVESTORS

Progressive Planet Solutions worked with the University of Alberta to develop a natural pozzolanic alternative to fly ash in concrete mixes. The company is aiming to have the product ready for commercial use in Canada during the 2021 construction season. Get the full story [here](#).

EDUCATIONAL NEWS

Virtual TMS Town Hall, May 21 @ 2 pm ET

The Masonry Society will be holding a [Virtual Town Hall](#) session to provide updates on Society Activities, review TMS's Financial Health, and look at upcoming projects & programs. TMS Board Members and leaders are especially encouraged to attend this session to help prepare for the Virtual Board Meeting on June 4 at 1 pm ET. Anyone may listen into these calls, though discussion may be limited based on time.

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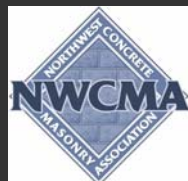
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