



Roofing Issues: Decks to Dockets
September 18-21, 2018 – New York, NY

***Emerging Technical Issues
Posing Liability Risks to Roofing Contractors***

presented by

Mark S. Graham

Vice President, Technical Services
National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA)

Topics

- Moisture in concrete roof decks (an update)
- Field uplift testing
- Polyiso. use
- Coverboard use
- Questions.... and additional topics

Moisture in concrete roof decks

NRCA Industry Issue Update, August 2013


INDUSTRY ISSUE UPDATE

NRCA Member Benefit

Moisture in Lightweight Structural Concrete Roof Decks

Concrete Moisture Presents Challenges for Roofing Contractors

NRCA Technical Services Section is receiving an increasing number of inquiries relating to the application of roof systems over concrete roof decks. These inquiries can be separated into two general questions: When is concrete roof deck dry enough to apply a roof covering? And why is a roof system applied over a concrete roof deck showing signs of moisture infiltration when the roof covering is leaking?

CONCRETE BASICS

There are three general types of concrete: normal-weight structural concrete, lightweight structural concrete and lightweight insulating concrete.

Normal-weight structural concrete is what most people think of as concrete. It has a density of about 150 pounds per cubic foot (pcf). Lightweight structural concrete has structural load-carrying capabilities similar to normal-weight structural concrete. It has a density in the range of 85 to 120 pcf. Lightweight insulating concrete, which many roofing professionals are familiar with as an insulating, slope-to-drain deck topping, typically has a density in the range from 20 to 40 pcf.

Structural concrete—normal-weight structural concrete and lightweight structural concrete—is produced by mixing large and small aggregates, Portland cement, water and, in some instances, admixtures such as fly ash or various chemical additives. Admixtures can add entrained air to the concrete, accelerate concrete's curing, retain concrete's excess moisture and/or lengthen concrete's finishing time. Use of admixtures typically is not visually identifiable in the field; microscopic analysis usually is needed for post-application identification of admixtures.

The primary difference in the composition of normal-weight structural concrete and lightweight structural concrete is the large aggregate type. Normal-weight structural concrete contains normal-weight aggregates such as stone or crushed gravel, which are dense and typically will absorb no more moisture than about 2 percent by weight. Lightweight structural concrete uses lightweight,

porous aggregates such as expanded shale, which will absorb about 7 to 23 percent moisture by weight. Lightweight aggregate needs to be saturated with moisture—its often stored in ponds—before mixing. As a result, lightweight structural concrete inherently contains much more water than normal-weight structural concrete.

Lightweight structural concrete is used in roofing-related applications for cast-in-place concrete roof decks using removable forms; concrete roof decks where a metal form deck remains in place; and as a deck topping material, such as a concrete topping surface over precast concrete planks or one.

One caveat, lightweight structural concrete typically cannot be easily distinguished from normal-weight structural concrete.

Visual identification is possible using magnification, typically a microscope used by a trained technician.

REPORTED PROBLEMS

The problems reported to NRCA associated with lightweight structural concrete roof decks include the following:

- **Moisture accumulation.** Excessive moisture from a concrete deck can be pressure-differential driven into and condensed within a roof system.
- **Adhesive del.** The presence of moisture can result in deterioration of moisture-cure roofing materials and adhesive bond loss between adhered material layers.
- **Adhesive issues with water-based and low-solids organic compounds.** Excessive moisture can affect adhesive curing and drying rates. Also, moisture can result in adhesive "bleeding," resulting in bond strength loss.
- **Blow and groove corrosion.** Excessive moisture can contribute to and accelerate metal component corrosion, including faster corrosion.
- **Insulation R-value del.** The accumulation and presence of moisture in most insulation products will result in reduced thermal performance (lower effective R-value).
- **Mold and green growth.** The presence of prolonged high-moisture

[Link](#)

2019 NRLRC Conference - Roofing Issues: Decks to Dockets

2

Concrete moisture-related issues

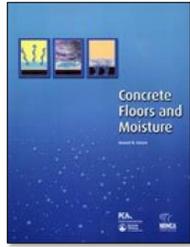
- Moisture accumulation
- Adhesion loss
- Water-based and LVOC adhesives issues
- Material degradation
- Metal and fastener corrosion
- Insulation R-value loss
- Microbial growth

PORTLAND CEMENT ASSOCIATION
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LABORATORIES
Development Department • Bulletin DB9

Table 1

Drying time in days at 73 F and 50% relative Humidity
for a 4-inch-thick specimen to reach 3 lbs/1,000 sq. ft./24 hrs.

Water-Cement Ratio	Bottom Sealed	Bottom Exposed to Water Vapor	Bottom in Contact with Water
0.4	46	52	54
0.5	85	144	199
0.6	117	365	>>365
0.7	130	>>365	>>365
0.8	148	>>365	>>365
0.9	166	>>365	>>365
1.0	190	>>365	>>365



Concrete Floors and Moisture (2008)
Howard Kanare

- A concrete slab will reach a 75% RH
- Normal weight structural concrete
 - Less than 90 days
 - Lightweight structural concrete
 - Almost 6 months

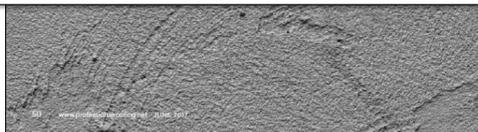
Professional Roofing

June 2017



Age	ASTM E96 calculated perm			
	Lightweight structural concrete		Normal weight concrete	
	Wet cup	Dry cup	Wet cup	Dry cup
28 days	1.48	0.78	3.42	1.05
60 days	1.45	0.47	2.03	1.13

The figure shows results of ASTM E96 water vapor transmission testing. Note the lightweight structural concrete has about half the permeability of regular weight concrete. Considering lightweight structural concrete arrives with more than twice the evaporable water of regular weight concrete, this explains why lightweight structural concrete retains moisture for so long.



Re-think our concept of concrete roof decks



A concrete deck is not a non-breathable, non-absorptive solid

Re-think our concept of concrete roof decks



RESEARCH+TECH



Are admixtures the answer?
Moisture in concrete roof decks continues to be problematic
by Mark S. Graham

24 www.professionalroofing.net DECEMBER 2018

Professional Roofing

December 2018

Link

Moisture vapor reduction admixtures (MVRAs)

BARRIER ONE
CONCRETE VAPOR BARRIER SOLUTIONS

DESCRIPTION: Barrier One is a low modulus, highly adhesive, non-solvent, non-toxic, and non-flammable liquid applied to concrete surfaces to form a continuous, impermeable barrier to moisture vapor transmission.

CONCRETE ADMIXTURES:

- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.
- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.
- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.

MANUFACTURER: Barrier One is manufactured by Barrier One, Inc., 10000 Highway 101, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77036, USA. Tel: 281-462-1000. Fax: 281-462-1001. Email: info@barrierone.com

MVRA 900™

DESCRIPTION: MVRA 900 is a low modulus, highly adhesive, non-solvent, non-toxic, and non-flammable liquid applied to concrete surfaces to form a continuous, impermeable barrier to moisture vapor transmission.

CONCRETE ADMIXTURES:

- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.
- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.
- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.

MANUFACTURER: MVRA 900 is manufactured by SPG Specialty Products Group, 4224 Highway 16, Suite 100, Smithville, TN 37087, USA. Tel: 615-885-1000. Fax: 615-885-1001. Email: info@spggo.com

Vapor Lock™

DESCRIPTION: Vapor Lock is a low modulus, highly adhesive, non-solvent, non-toxic, and non-flammable liquid applied to concrete surfaces to form a continuous, impermeable barrier to moisture vapor transmission.

CONCRETE ADMIXTURES:

- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.
- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.
- All admixtures must be added to concrete before placement at the job site.

MANUFACTURER: Vapor Lock is manufactured by SPG Specialty Products Group, 4224 Highway 16, Suite 100, Smithville, TN 37087, USA. Tel: 615-885-1000. Fax: 615-885-1001. Email: info@spggo.com

NRCA still has not seen an MVRA perform successfully in concrete roof deck applications

ASTM E96 testing of MVRA vs Non-MVRA concrete decks

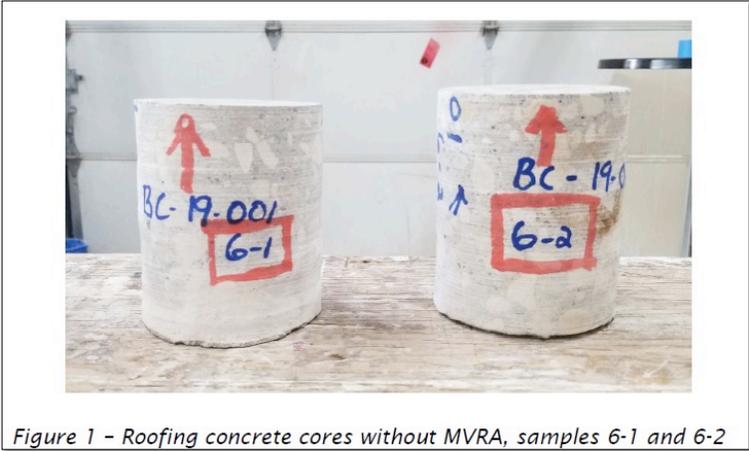


Figure 1 - Roofing concrete cores without MVRA, samples 6-1 and 6-2



Figure 2 - Roofing concrete cores with MVRA, samples A-1 and A-2.



Figure 3 - Roofing concrete cores with MVRA, samples B-1 and B-2.

Without an MVRA

With an MVRA

TABLE 2.1 SUMMARY OF AVERAGE WATER VAPOR TRANSMISSION PROPERTIES						
	SAMPLES 6-1 AND 6-2		SAMPLES A-1 AND A-2		SAMPLES B-1 AND B-2	
SAMPLE ID	6-1	6-2	A-1	A-2	B-1	B-2
Perm-in	1.9	1.8	3.7	3.4	3.7	3.8
Permeance for 25.4 mm (ng/Pa*s*m ²)	108	101	214	195	210	215
Permeability (ng/Pa*s*m)	2.8	2.6	5.4	4.9	5.3	5.5

The specimens containing an MVRA have tested WVT values about two times (i.e., more “vapor open”) more than the specimens without the MVRA

Deck acceptance

Whose moisture is it in the concrete?

Why should we take responsibility (or incur liability) for someone else’s moisture?

The screenshot shows the NRLRC website interface. At the top left is the NRLRC logo. To the right, there is a banner for the 40th Anniversary Seminar, dated September 19-21, 2019, at the New York Hilton Midtown, NYC. Below the banner is a navigation menu with links for About NRLRC, Membership, Legal Help Line, Education/Programs, Legal Library, and Members Only. The main content area features a news article titled "Contract provision addresses installation of roof system over concrete deck". The article text is partially obscured by a white box containing the following text:

Assessing moisture content in roof deck: Roofing Contractor is not responsible for the effects of moisture migration originating within the roof deck or substrate, including concrete decks, or due to moisture vapor drive from within the building. Residual moisture within the roof deck, particularly structural concrete decks, can adversely affect the properties and performance of roofing materials, regardless of additives or concrete admixtures that may be included in the concrete mix. Roofing Contractor's commencement of roof installation indicates only that the Roofing Contractor has visibly inspected the surface of the deck for visible defects prior to commencement of roofing and the surface of the deck appeared dry. The 28-day concrete curing period does not signify the deck is sufficiently dry.

Roofing Contractor is not responsible to test or assess the moisture content of the deck or evaluate the likelihood of condensation from moisture drive within the building. Roofing contractor recommends that roofing not commence until probes in concrete decks show moisture content is no greater than 75% relative humidity when there is no organic content within the roofing materials. Wood fiberboard, perlite and organic paper facers on polyisocyanurate insulation will generate mold with relative humidity as low as about 65-70%.

Field uplift testing



INDUSTRY ISSUE UPDATE

NRCA Member Benefit

Field-uplift testing



5-foot dome-like chamber to a roof surface's upside and applying a defined negative (uplift) pressure inside the chamber to the roof system's exterior-side surface using a vacuum pump (see photos). During the test, membrane surface deflection inside the chamber is visually monitored and measured to determine whether a roof system passes or is "suspect."

Using ASTM E907, a roof system is considered to be suspect if the deflection measured during the test is 25 mm (about 1 inch) or greater. During FM 1-52 testing, a roof system is suspect if the measured deflection is between 1/4 of an inch and 3/4 of an inch depending

regions, where a partial blow-off has occurred or where interior roof systems construction is suspected or known to be present.

FM 1-52 originally was published by FM Global in October 1970. The negative-pressure uplift test was added in August 1980 and has been revised several times. The current edition is dated July 2012 and includes an option for "visual construction observation" (VCO) as an alternative to negative-pressure uplift testing. VCO provides for full-time, third-party monitoring of a roof system application to verify roof system installation in accordance with contract documents.

[Link](#)

Methods

FM Global
Property Loss Prevention Data Sheets 1-52
July 2012
Page 1 of 24

FIELD VERIFICATION OF ROOF WIND UPLIFT RESISTANCE

FM Global clients must contact the local FM Global office before beginning uplift testing on any roofing work.

Table of Contents	
Page	Page
1.0 SCOPE	3
1.1 Changes	3
2.0 UNIFORM FIELD TEST RECOMMENDATIONS	3
2.1 Introduction	3
2.1.1 General	4
2.1.2 Negative-Pressure Test	6
2.1.3 Standard Uplift Test	6
2.1.4 Visual Construction Observation (VCO)	8
3.0 SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS	8
3.1 Background information	8

FM procedure; non-consensus

0.2 Application for Penetration of Roofing System (Form 1008R)

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Uplift test location example (one section with roof area up to 90,000 ft² (8,000 m²))
- Fig. 2 Example of negative pressure test location
- Fig. 3 Closure in single-ply roof cover while subjected to uplift pressure
- Fig. 4 Closure in single-ply roof cover while subjected to uplift pressure
- Fig. 5 Closure in unidirectional cover board at fastener and breather where access was visible in the longitudinally roof cover
- Fig. 6 Negative pressure test apparatus (mechanical) with water manometer
- Fig. 7 Diagram of water manometer
- Fig. 8 Standard uplift test

List of Tables

- Table 1 Recommended Tests for Various Roof Systems
- Table 2 Heating Uplift Test Procedure for Flat/low-Slope Green Buildings
- Table 3 Minimum Number of Negative Pressure Tests
- Table 4 Connection From Pressure to Depth of Water

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FM 1-52

Designation: E 907 - 96 An American National Standard

Standard Test Method for Field Testing Uplift Resistance of Adhered Membrane Roofing Systems

This standard is issued under the designation E 907. The number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption, the year of last revision, the year of withdrawal, or the year of approval. A superscript letter (s) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or approval.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of the resistance of adhered membrane roofing systems to uplift pressure. It applies to roof systems with adhered rigid roof assemblies or loose ply which are either adhered or mechanically fastened.

1.2 This test method is intended to be used as a measure of the uplift resistance of the roofing system. Systems requiring cold adhesive shall be in place for the cure time specified by the adhesive manufacturer to obtain optimum adhesion before conducting the test. The test results are intended to be used to verify the field installation of the roofing system.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards
E 155 Test Method for Uplift Resistance of Roofing Systems

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 A controlled negative pressure is created on top of the roof surface by means of a chamber fitted with a pressure measuring device and vacuum equipment.

3.2 The roof containing roofing such as gravel, slag, or particles, the loose roof shall be removed by sweeping a clean surface. The test area shall be prepared by sweeping the test area. Care shall be taken not to damage the test area. A heavy pressure increment is required to apply the negative pressure. The test area shall be prepared by sweeping the test area. A heavy pressure increment is required to apply the negative pressure. The test area shall be prepared by sweeping the test area. A heavy pressure increment is required to apply the negative pressure.

3.3 The test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E-4 on Performance of Building with the subcommittee of Subcommittee E4.01 on Roofing.

3.4 This standard was approved by the American National Standards Institute on July 10, 1996. Reapproved September 1999. Originally published as E 907-96. Last revised, with E 907-12 (2009) (2012) Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol. 11.02.

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Was consensus; since withdrawn

1.3 This test method will produce a negative test result if complete or in part to damage the roof membrane. Examples are the use of test sand, dirt, tape, water, or petroleum film.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method is suitable for determining the uplift resistance of the roofing system as stated in applicable specifications, bid documents, or when required by other contract documents. This test method is also suitable to measure the performance of the roofing system as determined by laboratory tests.

1.4 This test method is intended to be used as a measure of the uplift resistance of the roofing system. Systems requiring cold adhesive shall be in place for the cure time specified by the adhesive manufacturer to obtain optimum adhesion before conducting the test. The test results are intended to be used to verify the field installation of the roofing system.

1.5 Pressure-Sensing Device for measuring the negative pressure inside the chamber. The instrument shall be calibrated to indicate negative pressure in increments of 200 ± 20 Pa (7.5 ± 0.75 in. H₂O).

1.6 Pressure Equipment with sufficient capacity to create the negative pressure required in the test chamber (see 8.1). The chamber vacuum equipment shall also be equipped with controls to maintain the constant negative pressure at each test pressure increment as required in 8.1.5.

1.7 Dual Indicator with a wet test gauge and at least 0.05 mm (0.002 in.) scale and having an area of 90 mm (3.5 in.) square, mounted at the center of a 75 by 75 by 150 mm (3 by 3 by 6 in.) long, cylindrical bar, or multiple of equivalent offset. Feet on each end of the bar provide support and give a clear diameter of 75 mm (3 in.) above the test surface. This device is used to indicate the test results in the test area (see Fig. 3).

1.8 All pressure increments in the test shall be held for the enough away from the test area to ensure that the test area

ASTM E907

ASTM E907 is being re-drafted

From the ASTM committee process...

- FM has acknowledged there is no correlation between their lab. testing and the 5' x 5' field test
- Allowable deflection limits will not be prescribed; will likely be as agreed upon by the "interested parties"
- ASTM test methods require a precision and bias statement; currently no data available

FM Global
Property Loss Prevention Data Sheets 1-29
January 2016
Interim Revision April 2016
Page 1 of 49

12" 6"

12" 6"

A B

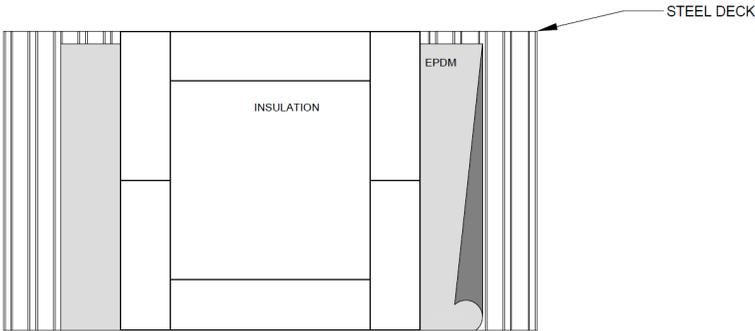
Fig. 6a/6b. 4 x 4 ft (1.2 x 1.2 m) insulation boards secured with nine fasteners per board.

The test of pattern 6a failed at 105 psf (5.0 kPa) by fracture of the insulation board. The test of pattern 6b failed at 160 psf (7.6 kPa) by screws pulling out of the deck.

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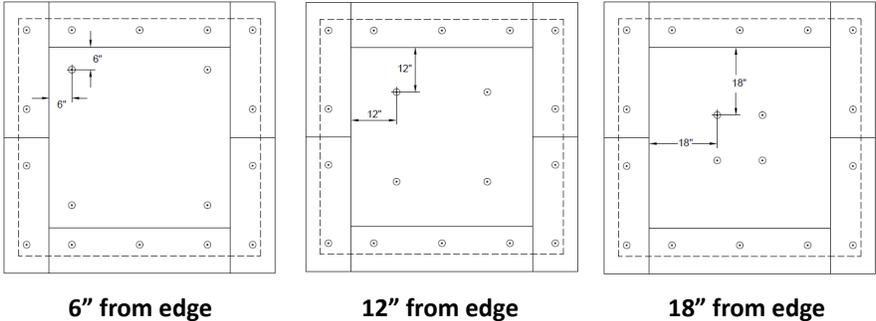
NRCA's laboratory testing

Controlled laboratory conditions



NRCA's laboratory testing

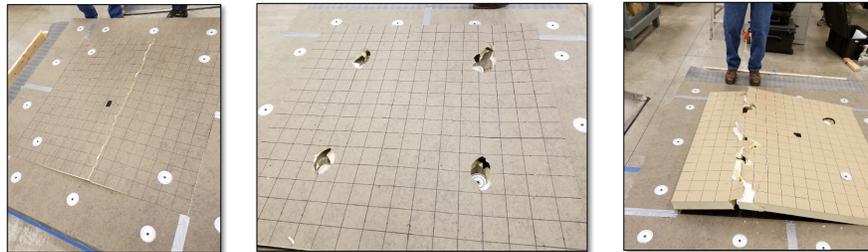
Controlled laboratory conditions



NRCA's laboratory testing -- Results

Controlled laboratory conditions

Condition	Fastener placement		
	6" from edge	12" from edge	18" from edge
Load at test failure	52.5 to 55 psf	60 to 75 psf	45 to 50 psf
Deflection at test failure	3¼" to 4"	2" to 5"	½" to 1"



NRCA's laboratory testing

Controlled laboratory conditions

Interim findings:

- Results are variable/not repeatable
- Differences in failure loads between 6" and 12" fastener offsets are not as large as is indicated in FM 1-29
- FM 1-52's ¼" to 1"/ASTM E907's 1" maximum allowable deflections appear arbitrary/very conservative

Recommendations

Field uplift testing

- Be knowledgeable and cautious....
- Consider contract provision language
 - See Industry Issue Update or NRLRC Contract Provisions
- In hurricane-prone regions consider alternative systems
 - Field uplift testing does not apply to mechanically-attached membrane systems
- Witness any testing and ask for/only act on written test reports
- Contact NRCA Technical Services

Polyiso. usage

TECH TODAY

Polyiso recommendations

The NRCA Roofing Manual provides guidance for polyisocyanurate insulation

by Mark S. Graham

In the U.S., various types, classes and grades of rigid board, foam, polyisocyanurate insulation are used as a component of low-slope roof systems. The NRCA Roofing Manual, *Membrane Roof Systems—2015* provides NRCA best practices guidelines for using specific polyisocyanurate insulation products to meet basic roof systems. Following is an overview of some of these guidelines.

ASTM C1289
The U.S. product manufacturer for rigid board, foam, polyisocyanurate insulation is ASTM C1289. The "Standard Specification for Foamed Rigid Cellular Polyisocyanurate Thermal Insulation Board," ASTM C1289 addresses 16 products. Within ASTM C1289, types, classes and grades differentiate various products.

NRCA recommends roof system designers use the complete ASTM C1289 designation (including type, class and grade) to clearly delineate the specific product intended.

Roofing
ASTM C1289 requires polyisocyanurate insulation be tested and found to have the minimum thermal resistance (R-value) provided in ASTM C1289, Table 2—Thermal Resistance Properties.

Also, product (board) or package marking must bear the product's actual R-value. Instead of using the basic U.S. polyisocyanurate insulation manufacturer's on-going to market using the long-term thermal resistance (LTTR) method for identifying polyisocyanurate insulation thermal resistance properties.

NRCA recommends designers specifying polyisocyanurate insulation determine roof system thermal resistance using an in-service R-value of 0.5 per inch. In NRCA's opinion, this design in-service R-value more closely represents conditions in the field (warmer than LTTR or used R-value).

In addition to design in-service R-value, NRCA recommends designers specify polyisocyanurate insulation by its stated thickness and use LTTR or R-value to avoid possible confusion.

Application-specific guidance
Polyisocyanurate insulation is available in 6- by 6- and 4- by 8-foot board sizes. NRCA recommends roof system designers specify a maximum 6- by 4-foot board size for polyisocyanurate intended for a substrate. The 6- by 8-foot size is appropriate for heavily loaded and mechanically attached applications.

Available thicknesses range from 1 to 4 inches thick. When using thermal polyisocyanurate insulation, NRCA recommends designers specify polyisocyanurate insulation be installed in multiple layers with a 1/8-inch minimum and 20-inch maximum thickness per layer.

For fasteners, NRCA recommends designers specify polyisocyanurate insulation be manufactured to have a minimum 20-psi compressive strength (Grade 2 on 3) and

have faces that are compatible with the assembly method and other roof assembly components.

ASTM C1289, Type 1 (flat faced) products generally are used for wall cladding applications and, because of their form and compressive strength, they are not considered to be appropriate for roofing applications.

ASTM C1289, Type II generally designates products appropriate for roofing applications. Type II, Class 1 (intentional delamination faced) products may be suitable with all roof system types. NRCA recommends Type II, Class 1 (intentional delamination faced) products be used with single-ply membrane roof systems using water-based bonding adhesives. Type II, Class 3 (intentional delamination faced) products may be suitable with hot-applied hot-top and polymer-modified bitumen roof systems.

Type II also has a Class 4 that designates high-density polyisocyanurate panels intended for use as roof insulation over board in a maximum thickness of 1/2 of an inch.

ASTM C1289 also includes one additional product type (Type III, Type IV, Type V and Type VII) to address polyisocyanurate insulation based composite board products.

NRCA recommends designers specify the use of a suitable cover board layer over polyisocyanurate insulation before roof membrane installation.

Additional information regarding using polyisocyanurate insulation in membrane roof systems is provided in *The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems—2015*, Chapter 6—Rigid Board Insulation, Section 6.3—Polyisocyanurate. ■■

MARK S. GRAHAM is NRCA's vice president of technical services.

12 www.professionroofing.net MARCH 2017

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March 2017

[Link](#)

ASTM C1289's Types, Classes and Grades

Product Type	Type I Class 1	Type I Class 2	Type II Class 1	Type II Class 2	Type II Class 3	Type II Class 4 ^b	Type III	Type IV	Type V	Type VII
Facer covering one surface	See 4.1.1	See 4.1.1	See 4.1.2.1	See 4.1.2.2	See 4.1.2.3	See 4.1.2.4	Perforated insulating board	Cellulosic fiber insulating board	OSB or plywood	Glass mat faced gypsum board
Facer covering opposite surface	See 4.1.1	See 4.1.1	See 4.1.2.1	See 4.1.2.2	See 4.1.2.3	See 4.1.2.4	See 4.1.3	See 4.1.4	See 4.1.5	See 4.1.6
Physical Property										
Compressive Strength, psi (kPa), min										
	16 (110)	16 (110)	Grade 1	Grade 1	Grade 1	Grade 1	16 (110)	16 (110)	16 (110)	16 (110)
			Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 2				
			20 (138)	20 (138)	20 (138)	110 (758)				
			Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3				
			25 (172)	25 (172)	25 (172)	140 (965)				
			25 (172)							
Dimensional Stability, Percent Linear Change, Thickness, max										
-40°F (-40°C) amb, RH	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
158°F (70°C) 67% RH	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
200°F (93°C) amb, RH	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Dimensional Stability, Percent Linear Change, length and width, max										
-40°F (-40°C) amb, RH	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
158°F (70°C) 67% RH	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
200°F (93°C) amb, RH	4.0	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Flexural Strength (modulus of rupture)										
psi (kPa), min	40 (275)	40 (275)	40 (275)	40 (275)	40 (275)	400 (2750)	40 (275)	40 (275)	40 (275)	40 (275)
(Break load) lbf (N), min	8 (35)	8 (35)	17 (75)	17 (75)	17 (75)	20 (89)	17 (75)	17 (75)	17 (75)	17 (75)
Tensile strength, psi (kPa), min Perpendicular to board surface										
	500 (24)	500 (24)	500 (24)	500 (24)	500 (24)	2000 (95)	500 (24)	500 (24)	500 (24)	500 (24)
Water absorption 2h percent by volume, max										
	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0
Water vapor permeance, perm (ng/Pa·s·m ²), max										
	0.3 (17.2)	0.3 (17.2)	1.5 (85.6)	4.0 (80)	8.0 (457.6)	1.5 (85.5)	8.0 (457.6)	c	c	c

^aCore foam thickness and facer type, thickness, and permeance can all influence the magnitude of values measured for the above physical properties. A product with a nominal 1 in. foam core (except for Type II, Class 4) with the facer on has been described for reference purposes. Consult manufacturers regarding specific foam-facer composite products (Types III, IV, V, and VII) and other product thicknesses. When appropriate, physical property values as agreed between buyer and seller shall replace those listed in Table 1 as qualification requirements described in 10.5.

^bProducts made at a maximum thickness of 0.5 in. (12.7 mm)

^cNot applicable

Polyiso. facer usage recommendations

The NRCA Roofing Manual: Membrane Roof Systems-2019

- **Foil facers (Type I):**
 - Wall assemblies
- **Reinforced cellulosic facers (Type II, Class 1):**
 - Most common facer
 - Hot-applied systems
 - Not recommended for water-based or LVOC adhesives

ASTM C1289, Type II, Class 1 facer



Raw material



Finished product

Polyiso. facer usage recommendations

The NRCA Roofing Manual: Membrane Roof Systems-2019

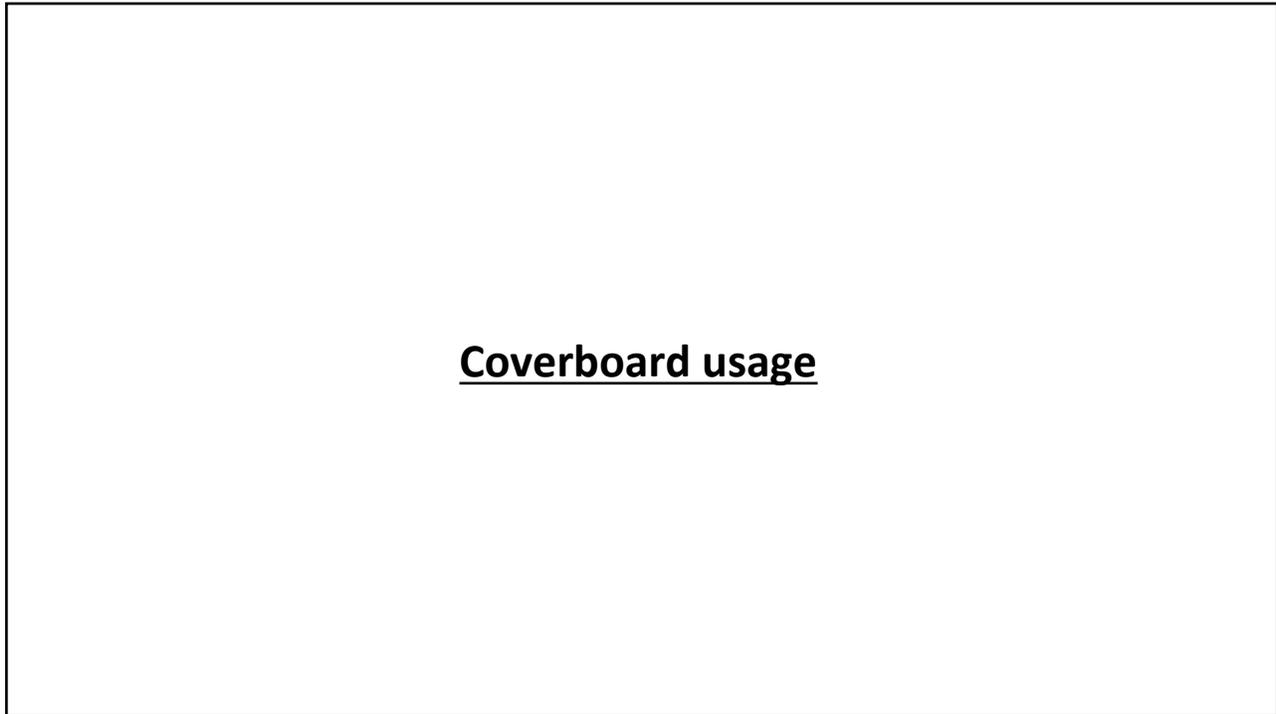
- **Foil facers (Type I):**
 - Wall assemblies
- **Reinforced cellulosic facers (Type II, Class 1):**
 - Most common facer
 - Hot-applied systems
 - Not recommended for water-based or LVOC adhesives
- **Coated glass facers (Type II, Class 2):**
 - Generally the same facer used on HD polyiso. (Type II, Class 4)
 - Adhesive-applied systems
- **Uncoated glass facers (Type II, Class 3):**
 - Hot-applied systems

Polyiso. usage

NRCA recommends the use of a suitable coverboard over polyiso. insulation

--The NRCA Roofing Manual-Membrane Roof Systems-2019

Coverboard usage



TECH TODAY

Cover board considerations

NRCA's cover board recommendations

by Mark S. Graham

In March, I addressed NRCA recommendations for the use of rigid board, faced, polystyrene insulation as a component of membrane roof systems. Included in those recommendations is the use of a suitable cover board layer. Following is some background information and NRCA's rationale and current recommendations for the use and selection of cover boards.

Background

NRCA first recommended the use of cover boards in an interim alert bulletin (NRCA Technical Bulletin No. 4) dated Aug. 10, 1978. The bulletin cited concerns about the growing incidence of blistering of roof membranes installed over rigid board polystyrene roof insulation, including a thin layer of wood fiberboard, perlite board or fibreglass board insulation was recommended with joints staggered from those of the polystyrene insulation layer below.

NRCA Technical Bulletin No. 7, dated March 1, 1979, further reinforced NRCA's previous recommendation.

In July 1981, NRCA Technical Bulletin No. 9 was issued and superseded Technical Bulletin No. 7. The bulletin indicated the preferred method for installing rigid board insulation was in two layers (base and cover board layers) and cover board usage was the then-current, best state-of-the-art practice.

In September 1988, NRCA issued Technical Bulletin No. 9, "NRCA statement on polystyrene, polycarbonate, and phenolic foam roof insulation." The bulletin cited field and laboratory tests conducted by NRCA and the National Roofing Contractors Association, documenting concerns with membrane blistering from insulation face down, face down delamination concerns and inadequate insulation compression resistance to withstand normally anticipated construction loads during applications.

The NRCA Roofing and Waterproofing Manual, Fourth Edition (1996) expanded upon these recommendations to also apply to polymer-modified bitumen membrane roof systems.

In March 2000, NRCA issued Technical Bulletin 2000-3, "Use of cover boards over polystyrene roof insulation," which further expanded its previous recommendation to apply to all membrane roof systems, including single-ply membrane roof systems. This bulletin indicated polystyrene insulation can exhibit problems, including face-down delamination, edge separation, cupping or bowing, delamination and crushing or ponding. A suitable cover board can separate a roof membrane from the polystyrene insulation; allows for insulation of insulation board layers in two layers with staggered board joints and may be required to achieve specific roof assembly fire-resistance classification. The bulletin identified common cover boards as glass-fiber gypsum board, perlite board, wood fiberboard, fiberglass board and mineral fiberboard.

The cover board recommendation provided by Technical Bulletin 2000-3 was incorporated into *The NRCA Roofing and Waterproofing Manual, Fifth Edition* (2001), *The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems—2007* and *The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems—2011*.

Current recommendations

In *The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems—2015*, NRCA maintains its longstanding recommendation for the use of cover boards in built-up, polymer-modified bitumen and single-ply membrane roof systems installed over show-lock rigid board thermal insulation.

In addition to the reasons cited in NRCA Technical Bulletin, The NRCA Roofing and Waterproofing Manual and The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems, cover board usage separates roof membranes from the substrate and potential performance effects of low line depressions and rutting in polystyrene insulation board surfaces. For additional information regarding polystyrene insulation board joint line surface depressions and rutting, see "Another round," February 2016 issue, page 50.

In *The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems—2015* Chapter 1-Roof System Configurations, NRCA recommends use of specific cover boards with specific roof membrane system types. Cover board selection also should be coordinated with roof membrane system manufacturers' guidelines and any necessary fire and wind-resistance classifications (UL classifications and FM Approvals' approvals).

Additional information regarding cover boards is provided in Chapter 1-Roof System Configurations and Chapter 4-Rigid Board Insulation of *The NRCA Roofing Manual, Membrane Roof Systems—2015*. ☐

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12 www.professionalroofing.net APRIL 2017

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Coverboard usage

- Cement board (ASTM C1325):
 - Compressive strength and rigidity
- Glass-faced gypsum board (ASTM C1177):
 - Compressive strength and rigidity
- High-density polyiso. (ASTM C1289, Type II, Class 4):
 - Compressive strength and adhesive compatibility
- Perlite board (ASTM C728):
 - Hot asphalt and torch application compatible
- Wood Fiberboard (ASTM C209):
 - Hot asphalt and asphalt adhesive compatible

Coverboard usage

Purchasing coverboards on a private-label basis from the warranting roof membrane manufacturer is recommended.

Questions and other topics...



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