New technical bulletins released

by **Mark S. Graham**

NRCA began issuing technical bulletins in 1977 to keep the roofing industry informed of developing or late-breaking technical issues. NRCA's technical bulletins are intended as addenda to *The NRCA Roofing and Waterproofing Manual.* Information from past bulletins typically is incorporated into subsequent manual editions or withdrawn if the information no longer is relevant.

New bulletins

In March, NRCA issued three technical bulletins: Bulletin 2000-1, "ASTM Standards for Polymer-Modified Bitumen Sheet Products"; Bulletin 2000-2, "Fire Safety Considerations in the Design of Roof Systems Utilizing Torch-Applied Polymer-Modified Bitumen Sheet Products"; and Bulletin 2000-3, "Use of Cover Boards Over Polyisocyanurate Insulation."

ASTM standards

Bulletin 2000-1 incorporates the six new American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards regarding polymer-modified bitumen sheet products into the manual. (See "Who is in compliance?" May 1999 issue, page 28, for descriptions of these standards.)

Roof system designers who specify polymer-modified bitumen sheet products should reference compliance with the ASTM standard appropriate for the specific bitumen modifier, reinforcement and surfacing type desired.

Minimizing fire risk

Bulletin 2000-2 provides recommendations for designers to consider to minimize the risk of fire during application of torch-applied polymer-modified bitumen sheet products. These include the suggestion that a thermal barrier, such as a noncombustible insulation layer, be incorporated into roof system designs that have torch-applied polymer-modified bitumen sheet products over combustible substrates.

If noncombustible insulation is used as a thermal barrier, NRCA recommends the roof membrane specification be considered an "insulation substrate" roof system configuration as described in the manual.

NRCA recommends designers specify a suitable cover board over polyisocyanurate insulation in all low-slope membrane roof systems.

Cover boards

Bulletin 2000-3 provides recommendations for the use of cover boards over polyisocyanurate insulation. NRCA previously had recommended using cover boards over polyisocyanurate, polyurethane and phenolic insulation when hot-applied bituminous membranes are installed.

In Bulletin 2000-3, NRCA recommends designers specify a suitable cover board over polyisocyanurate insulation in all low-slope membrane roof systems, including thermoset and thermoplastic single-ply membrane roof systems in ballasted, mechanically attached and fully adhered configurations.

Insulation cover boards should be at least ½ inch (13 mm) thick and composed of glass-faced siliconized gypsum board, perlite board, wood-fiber board, fiberglass board or mineral-fiber board. When selecting a suitable cover board, a roof system designer should consider a specific roof assembly's characteristics and cover board's compatibility with the assembly.

Closing thoughts

By issuing technical bulletins, NRCA continues its effort to maintain its manual as an up-to-date source for conservative, time-tested, sound roof system design criteria and application techniques applicable throughout the United States.

However, NRCA recognizes that some other design criteria and application techniques also may perform successfully.

You are encouraged to implement the recommendations contained within NRCA's new technical bulletins.

Editor's note: *NRCA has distributed technical bulletins to registered holders of the manual, which include all NRCA members. Copies of the bulletins are available by calling NRCA's Fax-On-Demand at 1-888-455-NRCA and requesting Document No. 1309 or visiting NRCA's Web site, www.nrca.net.*

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