



VOBB BLOCKS

Precision Dry Stack

Taking the premise that the mortar joint is the weakest part of a concrete block wall, the VOBB Block Wall System eliminates it altogether. The system relies on interlocking plastic clips and shims to temporarily hold the blocks level and aligned until the grout cures to lock them permanently in place. The manufacturer claims this block system can be installed faster and with less skilled labor than conventional CMUs,

not only because a mason doesn't need to bed each block, but because much of the cutting can be avoided. VOBB blocks are made based on a grid of six inches, with blocks in 18, 12, and 6-inch lengths, conforming to typical wall lengths and door openings. In addition, all VOBB blocks are 6 inches high and 6 inches wide. For more information, contact Verott Oaks Building Blocks, 337/781-0705, www.vobb.com.

Self-Sealing Furring Nail

For solving water-intrusion problems in stucco, the Fasten Seal furring nail not only furs out the lath so it's properly placed in the middle of the stucco, but it also seals the nail hole, so water can't leak into the framing. Each Fasten Seal nail consists of a 1³/₄-inch ASTM-rated lath nail with a preassembled, bright-orange plastic "wad" — the cylindrical spacer that keeps that wire lath at a prescribed distance from the wall. When the nail is driven home, it's pushed through a sealant that squeezes out, filling the recesses in the bottom of the wad and

creating a uniform seal around the nail hole. Fasten Seal was invented by Kirk Anderson, a site supervisor for a stucco contractor in California whose responsibility included troubleshooting moisture damage following the heavy El Niño rains of the late 1990s. In many cases, the problems identified by building forensics pointed toward the lath fasteners that penetrated the water-resistive barrier. Anderson knew there had to be a better way than caulking every nail hole, and Fasten Seal is his answer. For more information, contact Fasten Seal, www.fastenseal.com.



FASTEN SEAL



STRANDGUARD

Termite Treatment

iLevel, the engineered lumber division of Weyerhaeuser, has introduced StrandGuard — a borate-treated engineered wood that carries a 25-year warranty against fungus and termites. StrandGuard uses a zinc-borate preservative that will not increase the corrosion of fasteners like conventional, copper-based pressure-treatments. Though not intended for exterior applications (such as decks or porches), StrandGuard can be used for above-ground, protected wall and floor framing applications (sill

plates, studs, headers, columns, beams, and rim board) in termite-prone regions, and may provide an added level of mold protection in flood-prone regions. The base material, TimberStrand LSL, offers long lengths of super-straight, very stiff framing that holds fasteners much better than dimensional lumber. The result is a framing material that helps eliminate nail pops and resists bowing and twisting. For more information, contact Weyerhaeuser Co., 888/453-8358, iLevel.com.