

## **PRE-MANUFACTURED END DAMS**

### **Corners by Christine Beall...BIA Tech Note 21B**

It is important to make sure flashing is continuous around corners. Forming corners with conventional flashing is a complicated process involving folding and/or cutting, which increases the potential for flashing failure. Specifying prefabricated corners eliminates the need to cut, patch and fold flashing, thereby reducing some of the potential for water penetration, see Fig. 6. Whether field-formed or prefabricated, all corners should overlap at least 6 in. (150 mm), be sealed with mastic or an adhesive compatible with the flashing material, and conform to the shape of the structure.

There are several manufacturers out there right now trying to convince the architectural community, building owners and the BIA that masons have forgotten how to make corners and end dams. The logic goes that they are improperly made or left out entirely and the remedy is to buy them pre-formed from the manufacturer.

If the flashing material is plastic, PVC, EPDM or rubberized asphalt, then I agree. These materials will not take a fold and hold that fold indefinitely without some kind of mechanical assist. However, if the flashing material is laminated copper, your end dams and corners can be formed on site in seconds and stand in the vertical, unassisted, for the life of the wall.

Pre-manufactured end dams significantly increase the overall flashing budget and more importantly introduce the requirement for additional lap joints. If your project has 50 windows and you buy 100 end dams to go over those windows, you just introduced 100 lap joints that you did not need. So, if your mason cannot make end dams, I hope he is very good at lap joints. The fact that copper can be easily formed on site and will hold a fold indefinitely is one of the factors to consider when comparing the cost of a copper flashing system to plastic alternatives. It is likely that you can fund the move from the alternative systems back to copper with the money you were about to spend on the accessory end dams and corners.

Where is your money best spent? On a copper flashing material with a “life of the wall” warrantee or on rubberized asphalt flashing, with no warrantee, that requires the use of expensive accessories. Regardless of where you land on that issue, one answer is clear...If your flashing material is copper, you should never buy your end dams and corners. Make them on site!

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