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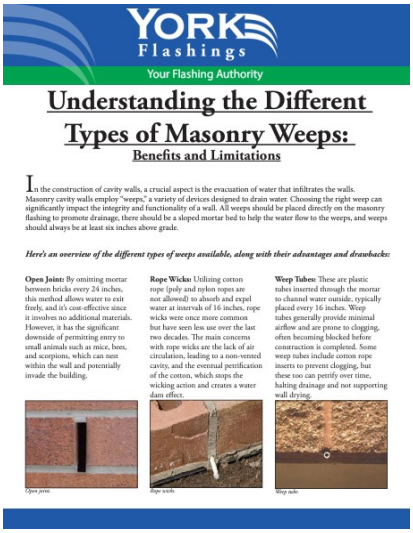
Industry Article: Understanding the Different Types of Masonry Weeps

Benefits and Limitations of Masonry Weeps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Understanding the Different Types of Masonry Weeps:
Benefits and Limitations

In the construction of cavity walls, a crucial aspect is the evacuation of water that infiltrates the walls. Masonry cavity walls employ "weeps," a variety of devices designed to drain water. Choosing the right weep can significantly impact the integrity and functionality of a wall. All weeps should be placed directly on the masonry flashing to promote drainage, there should be a sloped mortar bed to help the water flow to the weeps, and weeps should always be at least six inches above grade.

Here's an overview of the different types of weeps available, along with their advantages and drawbacks:

Open Joint: By omitting mortar between bricks every 24 inches, this method allows water to exit freely, and it's cost-effective since it involves no additional materials. However, it has the significant downside of permitting entry to small animals such as mice, bees, and scorpions, which can nest within the wall and potentially invade the building.

Rope Wicks: Utilizing cotton rope (poly and nylon ropes are not allowed) to absorb and expel water at intervals of 16 inches, rope wicks were once more common but have seen less use over the last two decades. The main concerns with rope wicks are the lack of air circulation, leading to a non-vented cavity, and the eventual petrification of the cotton, which stops the wicking action and creates a water dam effect.

Weep Tubes: These are plastic tubes inserted through the mortar to channel water outside, typically placed every 16 inches. Weep tubes generally provide minimal airflow and are prone to clogging, often becoming blocked before construction is completed. Some weep tubes include cotton rope inserts to prevent clogging, but these too can petrify over time, halting drainage and not supporting wall drying.

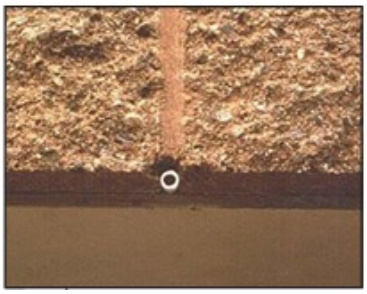
In masonry cavity walls, proper drainage of infiltrated water is essential for long-term structural integrity, achieved through the use of “weeps.” These devices must be positioned on the masonry flashing with a sloped mortar bed to guide water toward them, and should always be placed at least six inches above grade.

The selection of the appropriate weep type depends on the building's specific needs and environmental conditions.

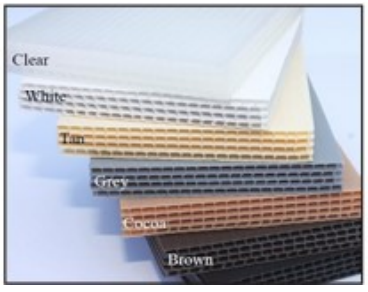
Read the Entire Article

Open joint

Rope wicks



Weep tube



Corrigated plastic coming in various colors

Plastic mesh

Stainless steel mesh

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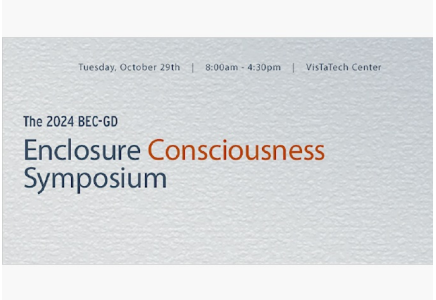

BEC - Detroit 2024 Enclosure Consciousness Symposium
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CSI/IIBEC Nashville Air Barrier Symposium
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Specializing in transition membranes and through-wall flashing, York has been inventing and producing flashings since 1935. As the leader in commercial and residential flashing industry, York has led the charge to create flashings that are compatible with the air barriers and insulations that populate the cavity wall.