

FireProof Environmental Construction Technologies for the 21st Century

By Michael Sullivan
November 2003

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When will the building industry realize that wood burns? When will the industry exhaust its supply of wood when our forests are burning faster than they are able to grow? These are serious environmental concerns we will all pay for if we don't significantly change our methods of construction.

Fire, as we have recently witnessed in California, is one of the most destructive of all nature's forces. With nearly 4,000 homes lost this past month, what are we doing wrong? The last time we lost this many homes was when hurricane Andrew hit Homestead, Florida in 1992. What will it take for the building industry to change?

Building with typical stick and frame cardboard construction is the main reason why so many homes were destroyed by this most recent fire, as it was when hurricane Andrew struck Florida.

Yes, wood is the least expensive material in the industry, yet when it comes to roofing, I cannot understand why any responsible builder would still use cedar shake wood roofing when it costs more than other fire rated roofing materials. As we saw on the television, most of these homes lost in California used just that, wood shingles. Just as the hurricane forced building code changes in Florida, so too must this most recent disaster force building codes to change from building with wood in California.

Builders must start thinking more about the many construction material alternatives as these latest facts are slapping the industry in the face. Wood shake shingles should be banned in high risk areas of California, as well as in other fire prone areas.

Earthen construction technologies have advanced to a point that it should be our first line of defense against fires, floods and hurricanes.

Adobe type structures have been used since the beginning of time with absolute proof of structural strength. With many examples of buildings still standing after thousands of years, when will the US housing industry realize this is the answer?

With well proven soil stabilization technologies now being employed in the earthen construction industry, as well as the advances in engineered compressed earth brick manufacturing technologies, now is the time to take this industry seriously.

With the latest advances being interlocking dry stack earth brick and earth block construction which has withstood typhoons and earthquakes in third world countries, we must start to embrace and promote earth block and brick homes as a replacement for wood structures.

We no longer need to use wood when Mother Nature has provided all the soil we need to accommodate massive construction projects worldwide. With the advances in soil analysis and stabilization technologies we can now eliminate the adverse effects of clay soils that expand and contract in adobe structures. With new engineered precision interlocking compressed brick and block technologies, this problem is eliminated.

Understanding earthen construction is achieved with a simple demonstration. It is fireproof, waterproof, insect proof, sound proof and offers the best structural safety in hurricane and earthquake zones. With the latest advanced testing clearly establishing this incredible advance, we all must start to examine the use of Mother Earth for our safety factor in the home construction industry.

The more you learn, the less chance you'll burn, it is that simple. For those in California, as with those in Florida, Mother Nature is an unpredictable force and we never know when the next disaster will strike. Will you feel safe in your stick and frame cardboard home when the next fires or hurricane threaten? If not, then please support our mission to introduce new environmentally friendly recycled building materials utilizing fly ash and stabilized soil compressed bricks and blocks for the good of us all.
