FIRE RATINGS OF BRICK VENEER ON WOOD FRAME CONSTRUCTION

In 2006 Southwest Research Institute performed ASTM E119 Standard Test Methods for Fire Tests of Building Construction and Materials for the Brick Industry Association, Reston, VA. All test panels consisted of wood framed walls typical of residential and some commercial construction with three different thicknesses of hollow brick veneer. Wall construction was as follows from inside to outside:

**Test Panel 1**
- 1/2" paper faced gypsum board
- 2x4 wood studs (1.5”x3.5”) w/ 3.5 inch batt insulation
- 7/16” OSB
- 15 lb asphalt paper WRB
- 1” air space
- 3.50” clay brick attached with 22 ga corrugated strip ties

**Test Panel 2**
- 1/2" paper faced gypsum board
- 2x4 wood studs (1.5”x3.5”) w/ 3.5 inch batt insulation
- 7/16” OSB
- 15 lb asphalt paper WRB
- 1” air space
- 2.87” clay brick attached with 22 ga corrugated strip ties

**Test Panel 3**
- 1/2" paper faced gypsum board
- 2x4 wood studs (1.5”x3.5”) w/ 3.5 inch batt insulation
- 7/16” OSB
- 15 lb asphalt paper WRB
- 1” air space
- 1.75” clay brick attached with 22 ga corrugated strip ties

All three test panels were exposed to temperatures prescribed in ASTM E119 for 1 hour. After full fire exposure, panels were removed from the test chamber and subjected to the hose stream test. All three panels passed the fire exposure and hose stream test to qualify for a 1-hour fire rating.

**Panel 1** (Photo 2) – was undamaged. There was no charring or singeing of combustible materials in the brick cavity. Asphalt paper heated only enough to stain the OSB.

**Panel 2** (Photo 3) – had some charring as temperatures in the brick cavity reached 350 deg F. There was minor cracking in the brickwork after fire exposure and hose stream.

**Panel 3** (Photo 4) – had some combustion of asphalt paper and OSB in the brick cavity and flames erupted from cracks in the brickwork after the panel was removed. It was clearly at the end of its useful fire exposure, but no flame passed through the wall, cool side temperatures were less than allowed, and the assembly was not breeched by the hose stream. See Photo 4 below.

**CONCLUSIONS**

These tests clearly demonstrate the ability of commonly used anchored brick veneer to resist outside fire exposure of up to one hour. The minimum brick thickness in these tests was far less than the 2.625” minimum thickness of anchored veneer in the masonry code (TMS 402/ACI 530/ASCE 5). Yet all three panels passed the 1-hour fire exposure test with hose stream. So any wood framed wall with similar construction and code compliant anchored brick veneer would qualify for 1-hour fire resistance from outside exposure.
REFERENCES


