

BARTKOWSKI AND MCDONALD PRESENT...

THE BARTKOWSKI REPORT

If you are like most contractors, just hearing the word “firestopping” elicits responses ranging from surrender to contempt. Let’s face it...not many like this subject. To compound matters, where this line item was an inconvenient nuisance on the jobsite only 5-6 years ago, it has grown into a headache for many today.

Take heart – it doesn’t have to be that way.

I believe that the primary reason firestopping continues to confuse and frustrate contractors on a project is the manner in which it approached.

For years, firestopping has been product focused. And, for many, this still is the case.

“Is the caulk red?”

“Do you have any 2-Hr. Caulk?”

“I only buy according to price, as all those fire caulks are the same?”

If you’ve caught yourself saying these or other similar type statements or have heard others say things to that effect, then firestopping will continue to be a problem for you on all your future projects.

It’s natural to be product focused: that’s how we buy paint, carpeting, light bulbs, wire nuts, etc... It’s just not the way one should look at firestopping.

As a matter of record, **SYSTEMS CARRY RATINGS, PRODUCTS DON’T!**

I believe that the only way to fully insulate yourself from the “boogey man” on all firestopping related issues is to insist on the installation of tested system designs for the conditions you encounter on the job. Although there are other independent testing laboratories, the one testing agency almost universally accepted is Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

Now there may still be authorities having jurisdiction that are still product focused, the trend is rapidly moving toward the tested system design approach. And, as we move forward, it is only a matter of time until all inspectors, building code officials and other AHJ’s insist on the UL Tested System Design model.

So, the next time you are faced with a firestopping submittal that you have to prepare or you are reviewing a submittal presented to you by a subcontractor, insist upon this model.

Furthermore, a review of most firestopping specifications and the model building codes reference the tested system design approach over the product focus.

Adoption of this approach to firestopping will save you time and money by keeping your project in compliance and on schedule.

Bartkowski & McDonald LLC is a full service provider of firestopping services and programs. Our service offerings include the following:

1. Firestopping Audits
2. Quality Control / Quality Assurance Programs for remediation work and new construction projects
3. Internet based Fire Barrier Management / Penetration Permit Program
4. Firestopping Installation Services
5. Damper Inspections

We look forward to establishing a relationship with your company. Should you have any questions on any firestopping matter, we would welcome the opportunity to service you.

Sincerely,

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BARTKOWSKI & McDONALD LLC
FIRESTOPPING SERVICES

*PREPARE NOW FOR THE
FUTURE... ..*