

March 2009

THINK green™

an e-newsletter on the green benefits of thin brick

Benefit #3- Sustainability

Wikipedia defines a sustainable or 'green' building as "An outcome of a design which focuses on increasing the efficiency of resources use- energy, water and materials- while reducing building impact on human health and the environment during the building life cycle, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance and removal."

It is easy to make the argument for the sustainable aspects of full face brick since, full brick is both long lasting and is made from a source of plentiful material.

To follow are some compelling reasons why one can consider thin brick as an even better option to use as a buildings face material as compared to full face brick.

Looking closer at the above definition

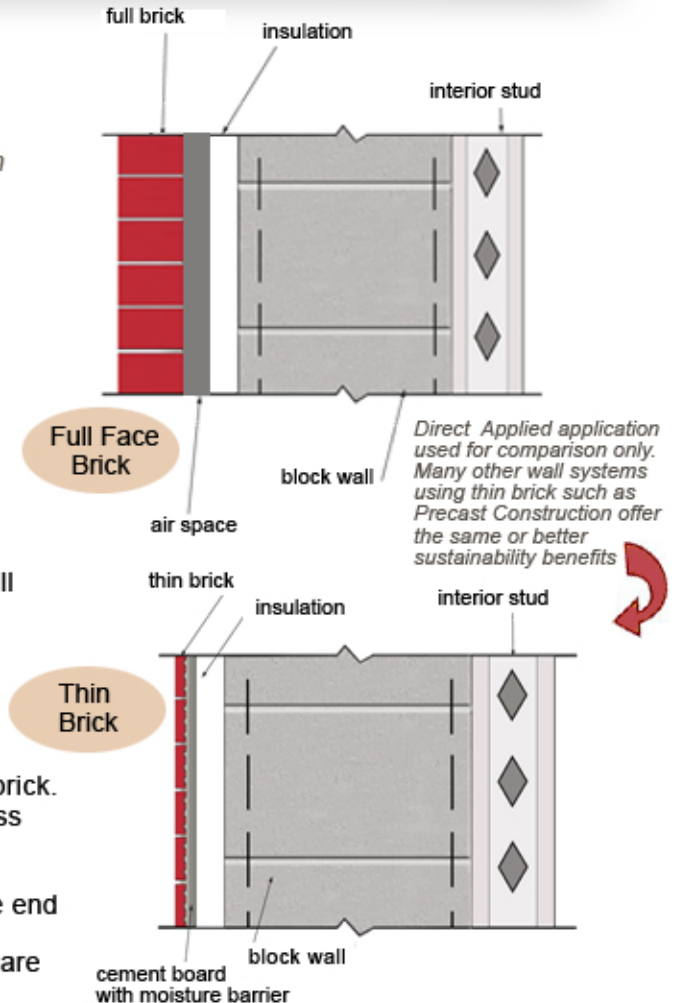
Resource use- Thin brick uses 80% less raw material than full brick.

Site selection- There can be less site disturbance when using building systems that incorporate thin brick.

Energy Use- On average 80% less energy-typically natural gas- is used in the kiln firing of thin brick as compared to full brick. This means both less of an irreplaceable resource use and less pollutants into the atmosphere.

Removal- Less material means less material to remove at the end of a building life cycle. Thin brick is made of the same inert material as brick, so use as road bed, filler material or re-use are viable options.

In addition, the following can be said about METROBRICK® thin brick in regards to sustainability. Because METROBRICK® absorptions are much less than full bed brick, spalling and efflorescence are reduced or eliminated. The building facade can basically last forever. With the thin brick attached to the wall system, minor repairs require only the removal of the affected bricks. Full bed brick building repairs are much more costly and difficult. Since thin brick is not a structural element and each brick is independently adhered to the wall, cracks don't form between bricks like in full bed brick.



LEED fact ▶

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) 2009
One update in LEED version 2009- due out in April, 2009- is a "Transparent Environmental/Human Impact Credit Weighting- LEED has undergone a scientifically grounded re-weighting of credits, which will more accurately reflect a credit point impact on the environment and human health (positive or negative)." USGBC

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