



TEXAS
LATHING &
PLASTERING
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION

Lath • Plaster • Stucco
E.I.F.S. • Drywall
Veneer Stone
Fireproofing

CONTROL JOINT – ALTERNATE METHOD OF APPLICATION

The contract documents make reference to *ASTM C1063 – Installation of Lathing & Furring for Portland Cement Plaster*. A clarification and definition of Control Joints as well as an alternate method of installing Control Joints in the Portland Cement Plaster is being submitted for use on this project.

ALTERNATE METHOD OF INSTALLATION: The control joints installed in the field of the stucco cladding will be installed on top of the metal lath plaster base without cutting the lath behind the control joint.

RATIONALE

ASTM C1063 Article 7.11.4 *Control Joints-General* and 7.11.4.1 *Control Joints*, do not recognize the distinction between expansion joints and control joints. In fact, Section 8 Keywords uses the term “*expansion control joint*.” Article 7.10.1.4 reads “*Lath shall not be continuous through control joints but shall be stopped and tied at each side*.” If this statement is applied to the control joint when used as a true expansion joint, then you will find no confusion or disagreement in the industry.

Control joints, as recognized in the lath and plaster industry, are a part of the lath and plaster assembly, not of the structure. Control joints in stucco cladding installations are to serve as artificial planes of weakness where stresses, generated in the building or due to thermal changes and introduced into the stucco, can dissipate without forming cracks in the stucco. Control joints do not imply that cracks will not occur in stucco. Control joints do not act like an expansion joints. Control joints do not move in an accordion fashion.

Lath and plaster promotional bureaus have, over the years, published industry standards, practices and documents which are representative of successful installations in the lath and plaster industry. Two of the oldest and most respected bureaus in the country are the Northwest Wall and Ceiling Bureau (NWWCB) and the Texas Bureau for Lathing and Plastering (TBLP). For years Architects and Engineers have recognized the protracted political process when trying to effect changes or get clarification in national standards such as ASTM and ANSI and have relied on promotional bureaus for up to date accurate means and methods. Both the NWWCB and TBLP recognize that the cutting of the lath behind the control joints is not necessary nor always practical for the control joints to function as relievers of stress within the membrane. Each has published documents which express this opinion.

The Guide Specifications for Metal Lathing and Furring published by the Metal Lath/Steel Framing Association in 1991 references different methods of installing control joints. Where a double stud is not present, the metal lath is shown as continuous behind the control joint. This concurs with the TBLP and NWWCB position.

When metal lath is installed the sheets of metal lath are staggered to prevent alignment of sheet laps to line up which would create an unwanted plane of weakness in the wall. ASTM C1063 Article 7.8.1 states that *side laps of metal plaster bases shall be secured to framing members*. If you cut the lath behind control joints without placing metal support framing behind each leg of the control joint, then you violate Article 7.8.1. It is not practical to install double stud framing at each side of a control joint, vertical or horizontal. To do so in effect makes the control joint an expansion joint.