



In This Issue...Design Issues – Wrap Those Walls

This article is another in a series dealing with “design issues”. As we have said previously, approximately 50% of the problems we see on roofs occur due to “improper” design. We recognize that this type of issue may appear to be much more of a concern to organizations involved in new construction, but design problems affect reroofing too, perhaps more so. This issue focuses on parapet wall flashing details. We selected this topic because far too often parapet walls are improperly flashed.

Parapet walls at the perimeter of buildings should always, without exception, be completely encapsulated or “wrapped” to use roofer slang. It is inevitable that when shortcuts are taken, as illustrated in the first two photos, that the walls will leak. These copings (copings are the metal caps on top of the walls) were never up to the task of keeping water out..and they didn't.

The exposed block wall in the first picture is definitely NOT what you want to see. The second photo shows the consequence. (The second photo shows the outside face of the wall that is shown in the first photo.) The arrow points to water stains on the face of the brick. Those stains have been caused by water entering through the back and top of the wall. The soffits (entrance canopy ceilings) below are damaged and the brick will be eventually fracture if this is not corrected.

The third photo shows the same area after it was repaired. In this case a piece of metal trim was installed at the outside edge. Another way to finish the wall is to install a metal coping across the top of the wall. Especially in single ply applications, encapsulating the walls should be considered a mandatory detail.

In the next article we will explore wall problems from a different perspective.

