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Wienerberger Operating and Maintenance Manual

Further to your request for Health and Safety information on Wienerberger Best Quality facing and engineering bricks in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), and other relevant legislation relating to Safety in Construction, please find below a copy of notes prepared following an assessment of products.

Also included is a product technical data sheet, confirming the guaranteed levels of performance. You will note that our products do not require to be marked with any hazard warning labels under the regulations for such identification.

The European Standard Specification for Clay Masonry units was published in 2003 (BS EN 771-1), and is the current product Standard. The former British Standard (3921: 1985) was formally withdrawn in April 2006 and certain previous terms and definitions are no longer applicable.

It is Wienerberger's policy to provide both facing and engineering bricks which are frost resistant, with a durability designation of 'F2' (European Standard), confirming the suitability for building details of severe exposure, where units may be saturated and subjected to repeated freezing and thawing. Please refer to the attached datasheet for confirmation of the durability designation, and other specific technical information, as guaranteed performance can vary as a result of different manufacturing processes.

All of our Best Quality products are within the lowest category ('S2') of active soluble salts content. (Which in conjunction with 'F2' durability is equivalent to the former 'FL' designation in the British Standard).

With regard to maintenance, as a brick used externally, no regular maintenance or cleaning should be required. The natural finish of the product should provide an appropriate appearance for the life of the building and we would not recommend any applied coating or treatment under normal circumstances.

Should you require further technical information, please contact to contact Wienerberger's Cheadle Royal Head Office on 0161 491 8200.

Guidance Notes

The safe use of brick products

January 2010

This general information is provided in order to assist purchasers and users of Wienerberger brick products when seeking compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1), the Consumer Protection Act (2), the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (3) and The COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations (4) or any associated legislation relating to Health, Safety and the Environment both during and after construction.

Any further information about Wienerberger brick products with respect to Health, Safety and Environmental matters is available on request.

Offloading & Handling

Fired clay is an inert material which presents no risk to health or safety through handling or use subject to good site practice being followed.

The use of safety clothing such as safety hats, boots, gloves and industrial glasses is strongly recommended whenever practicable, to minimise risks associated with falling objects and sharp edges.

When offloading and handling packs of products, purpose designed lifting equipment must be used. This equipment must be capable of safely supporting the weight of the pack. The weight of the pack varies according to the size of the product and quantity per pack, but the maximum weight of a standard pack from Wienerberger factories is 1.3 tonnes approximately.

Some products are delivered on disposable wooden pallets. Other packs are provided with voids to accept appropriate lifting forks. Bricks are contained within packs by plastic shrink-wrap or held together as a unit using polypropylene or steel bands, which may again be contained by a plastic bag. In some cases paper layering is provided to protect products in transit.

All personnel involved in the handling of packs should be made aware that in certain circumstances steel straps can potentially snap, allowing products to fall. Likewise polypropylene straps can fail and plastic bags may split. To avoid this situation good site practice should be followed:

AVOID abnormal shocks to the packs

AVOID sliding one pack along the top face of another pack

DO NOT lift packs using only the packing materials, i.e. straps or pallet

NOTE straps and bags can deteriorate over a period of time

NOTE packs must be securely gripped at their base by appropriate grabs positioned parallel to the straps, or lifted by forks inserted into the voids provided in the packs or pallets accordingly. It is recommended that suitable handling forks should have a width of 90mm and be 1,100mm long. It is also recommended that grabs should only be used on solid packs.

Some pack configurations can be split into a number of equal blades (e.g. 5 x 100 bricks for a standard 500 all header pack.)

These blades are only stable if stored or moved around while laid flat on a pallet – they must not be lifted or moved in the vertical position.

Storage

Packs must be stored on suitably prepared hard standing areas, which are firm and level. Packs should not be stored on site more than two packs high, and care must be exercised to ensure that the stack is entirely stable in all circumstances. Further details about storage of materials is given in BS 5628 Part 3 (5) and BS 8000 Part 3 (6) to which reference should be made by site personnel.

Opening of Packs

Extreme care must be taken when cutting the strapping around packs. Suitable wire cutters must be used and straps must not be burst by the application of levered pressure.

When cutting straps, the operative should stand to the side of the strap being cut and not in line with the strap. Highly tensioned straps can spring away from the package when tension is released. In accordance with the Protection of Eyes Regulations 1974 (7) (SI number 1681) and the Personal Protection Regulations (8), persons cutting wire strapping under tensions **MUST** wear suitable eye protection. For further information please refer to BS 3092-1 (9).

Uses of Product

Care must be taken when handling individual products as some sharp edges may be present. Products must not be dropped, tipped or thrown as personal injury may occur. A suitable risk assessment must be carried out whenever products are manually handled. For further information refer to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (10).

Ensure that small loose particles of fired clay or facing materials are not allowed to come into contact with eyes or any open wound. This is particularly important if products are to be cut or machined on site. If contact does occur, seek appropriate medical assistance.

i) Mechanical Equipment

If mechanical equipment is to be used to alter the shape of the product(s) this must be done by adequately trained, instructed and equipped personnel using suitable equipment. For further information refer to the Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations (11) and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (12). Suitable protective equipment must be used as recommended by the equipment manufacturer.

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ii) Dry Cutting

Persons carrying out a dry cutting operation **MUST** wear suitable respiratory protection. A suitable respirator or disposable mask, meeting BS CN 149 (Specification for Filtered Masks to Protect Against Particles) (13) is recommended.

The level of noise generated by machinery may also require ear protection to be worn. Our advice would be to avoid dry cutting of bricks wherever possible. Wet cutting also reduces the amount of dust generated and is a preferable method of cutting.

iii) Disposal

All packaging materials must be disposed of in accordance with the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations (14).

COSHH Details

In general fired clay products contain 50-70% silica; bricks with other clay contents will vary from this figure but all products contain a percentage of silica. If powered tools are used to cut products, substantial amounts of dust may be produced.

Depending on the environment and the method of cutting, it is possible that some respirable silica may be generated.

The Work Exposure Limit (WEL) for respirable silica is currently 0.1mg/m³ (2006). To check on current legislative levels the current version of EH40 (15) must be consulted. All the current mandatory and procedural requirements are detailed above.

However if any further information or clarification is required please do not hesitate to contact our Design Services Department who will be pleased to help.

N.B. The cleaning of masonry can involve the use of chemicals; care

must be taken to ensure that manufacturers' instructions are rigorously followed and that the type of cleaning and particular chemicals are appropriate to the nature of the work to be undertaken.

If any further information is required, please contact our Design Services Department to clarify activities prior to work commencing.

References

- (1) The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- (2) The Consumer Protection Act
- (3) Construction (Design and Management) Regulations
- (4) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- (5) BS 5628, Part 3: Code of Practice for use of Masonry Materials & Components, Design & Workmanship.
- (6) BS 8000, Part 3: Workmanship on Building Sites - Code of Practice for Masonry.
- (7) Protection of Eyes Regulations 1974
- (8) Personal Protection Regulations 1974
- (9) BS 3092-1 Eye Protection
- (10) Manual Handling Operations Regulations
- (11) Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER)
- (12) Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations
- (13) BS EN 149 - The Specification for Filtered Half Masks to Protect against Particles
- (14) Environmental Protection (Duty Care) Regulations
- (15) HSE Guidance note EH40 – Occupational Exposure Limits

It is important that this information and the references detailed be used as guidance and information. Any subsequent legislation or guidance issued which supersedes or enhances this data must be used. If you are in any doubt or require any guidance or clarification please do not hesitate to contact our Design Services Department via the Customer Service Centres.

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