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Residential & Commercial Waterproofing | Bathrooms | Balconies | Retaining Walls | Ponds | Underground Carparks

CANBERRA BUILDING NEWS EDITION 1 - 2010

Waterproofing - We Can Get It Right

It was with great interest that I read your editorial in your last MBA publication, provided by Jerry Howard - “Why Can’t We Get It Right?” Jerry is absolutely correct in his overview of the problem and the reasons and remedies. As a practitioner with over 10 years experience, I felt it was important to follow up with the contractor’s perspective.

Waterproofing Failures

When it comes to waterproofing in both residential and commercial dwellings there are two major issues that undermine the integrity of waterproofing systems.

The first is quite simply the inability of the membrane to keep water out of the designated area. Penetration of the protective shield of the membrane is quite common and can occur due to unqualified or careless application or the use of an unsuitable product for that particular substrate or building situation.

The second is the failure of the entire waterproofing system and occurs when the water escapes through means outside the control of the membrane. There are several factors that can contribute to the failure of a waterproofing system such as insufficient fall grades on floors, insufficient barriers and incorrect position of barriers.

Waterproofing and Tiling, can there be a compromise?

The main priority for Steven and Rae Aмоса of ACT Waterproofing, is to find the most suitable product for each project and ensure it is applied correctly to meet national standards and manufacturer specifications. Having an independent trade that specialises in waterproofing will give you the certainty and minimise longer-term problems with this key element in the construction process.

Since established in 1994, ACT Waterproofing have seen the emergence of the Tiler/Waterproofer or builders who employ unqualified construction workers to simply apply waterproofing sealant with a brush. Although there are very few who go through the training and certification program, there are far too many unqualified tradesman and builders out there who regularly put people’s homes and commercial buildings at risk of future water damage for the sake of cutting costs in this critical component of the work.

For Tiling contractors, their number one priority will always be to have a finished product that is appealing to the naked eye. Unfortunately, this may mean applying an inferior waterproofing product that is easily applied but is likely to fail resulting in very expensive remedial work.

ACT Waterproofing have been successfully waterproofing balconies since 1994. “We’ve come a long way with builders and clients, helping to change ill-conceived building practices. We have created a working relationship where builders are now consulting us on upcoming projects in an effort to address the potential waterproofing problems before we are called onsite. This is a positive step forward but there is still a long way to go.” (Steven Aмоса, ACT Waterproofing)

Who is responsible?

At times, the roles and responsibilities of building designers and builders are not clearly defined or understood, which can lead to failures during construction.

The waterproofer’s job is to ensure that projects are waterproof once the work is ready for waterproofing and to be able to provide a warranty for the works completed. This is done with the assurance that every tradesman that comes through the site before and after shows the same level of respect for the work of the previous contractors. This accountability should be at the earliest intervention in the project and this should be at the design stage of all projects. The builder’s primary task is to build the project. The designers should possess the expert knowledge in specifying the product’s performance and suitability for its intended purpose.

ACT Waterproofing are continuing to work together with designers, builders and clients to find the optimum solution for each project which, in turn, provides peace of mind for everyone. Without a doubt, the best product on the market for waterproofing balconies is EPDM rubber membrane which we have been using for almost 10 years. It is used in all situations including ponds and a similar product is used for shower bases. Jerry Howard’s editorial also endorses sheet membrane products as the preferred option.

The team at ACT Waterproofing also have extensive experience in the use of products such as polyurethane, epoxy, torch-on bitumen, cement-based, bitumen-based, water-based products, injection, semi-cured and fully-cured rubber sheeting, which further endorses their versatility as waterproofing contractors.

If you require specific advice for your upcoming project, contact the team at ACT Waterproofing today.