



WELCOME TO MY WORLD

The Publisher and Editor of Masonry Magazine wanted to give you a place to ask questions regarding Codes and Standards.

Well, folks, here it is.

Welcome to my world! And before you ask what a ticket to my world costs or how much the travel expenses are to get there, let me explain what my world is. It is not as glamorous as big game hunting, marlin fishing, or skydiving.

My world is the World of Codes and Standards. While many of you are asking what in the blazes I'm talking about, let me explain.

Our lives are governed by many codes. Most everyone has their own personal or business association "Code of Ethics." A code is a system of rules of

conduct or procedures. When a "code" is accepted by a governmental body, it becomes law by either inclusive writing of the code or by reference. Such is the case of the International Building Code (IBC). A building code is considered a life/safety document for obvious reasons.

One of the documents of major importance is the "Building Code & Specifications for Masonry Structures," aka TMS 402/602. While this code was previously maintained by a joint committee and labeled as a joint document, it is now under the sole care of The Masonry Society.

The time cycle of the TMS 402/602 is three years. The 2016 Edition of the

code has been approved and printed. Because of the cost in time, money and personal commitment, the building industry is trying to lengthen the cycles of the various trade codes. The TMS 402/602 cycle is now six years and will be published as a 2022 document.

Many of you will question why it may take so long to change the code. The reasons for this is time, language, and consensus. The rule of the work is done by volunteer committee members. While their employers may pay their expenses for the twice yearly meetings, the committee members volunteer their time. The code language must be mandatory and not contain any "may or maybe" type of words. It must be noted that the commentary is explanatory and not mandatory. Another time consuming part of the process is that the voting is not a simple "Majority Rule." Every "no" vote cast has to be dealt with in a concise and rational manor before any change can move forward.

As you can see, the formation and publication of this document is a necessary and serious undertaking. So much so it has (ANSI) a American National Standards Institute approval. This code and specification is our

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masonry industry's "How To and When To" book. It must be followed unless the building contract documents are more stringent. The Building Codes are minimum codes, not maximum.

Having now given you some background as to the Building Code Requirements (TMS 402) and Specifications (TMS 602) for Masonry Structures, I must tell you the next step. It is the most important part of this discussion for mason contractors and masons. You must understand the code and follow it. Remember, it is the law.

Now, I know some of you won't believe me when I tell you that there are people out there that really believe that "ignorance is bliss." Your Mason Contractors Association of America (MCAA), along with other national associations and state groups, provide educational seminars and classes to keep the masonry industry up to date on code.

This space is specifically for you, our readers. If you have questions about the TMS 402/602 or ASTM standards, send them to Painter's Corner, here at Masonry by emailing dkamys@masonrymagazine.com.

We will do our dead level best (pun intended) to provide you with a response.

Now, I'll close in the vernacular of an old "brickie." If you don't understand, ask an "old timer."

Hey, come on around the corner sometime.

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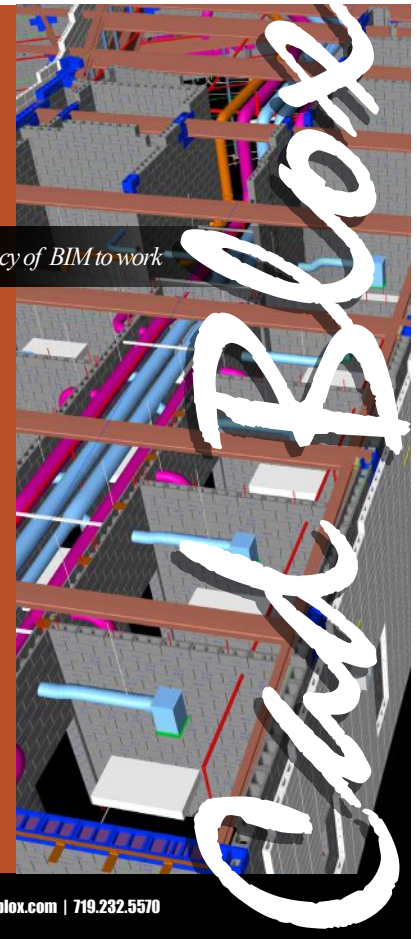
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