GREENSTREAK GROUP, INC.
A Family of Construction Companies

GREENSTREAK

WESTEC BARRIER TECHNOLOGIES

BBZ USA

TUFF-N-NUFF

September 10, 2008

Re: Response to recent request for SBR or Neoprene rubber waterstop

Dear Concrete Professional:

I would like to thank you for your interest in Greenstreak Group waterstop products! We have recently received an inquiry on a project in which you are involved that has a requirement for either SBR or Neoprene rubber waterstop. As you may be aware, SBR and Neoprene rubber waterstop has been available for many decades and was one of the first embedded flexible materials to be used as a waterstop for sealing joints in concrete structures. However, with the significant increase in the use of flexible PVC waterstops due to lower cost, flexibility in profile design, ease of installation, and dramatically reduced production times, the popularity of rubber waterstop has diminished. Furthering the demise of rubber waterstop has been the introduction of TPE-R (thermoplastic elastomeric rubber) waterstop for chemical containment applications.

One could go as far to say rubber waterstop has become obsolete, as there is generally no application for a rubber waterstop that could not be better served with either a PVC or TPE-R waterstop. As a result, the number of manufacturers producing rubber waterstop has dwindled recently. Greenstreak has continued to offer SBR and Neoprene waterstops in spite of their decline in usage, but due to the low demand, minimal quantities are stocked. Furthermore, due to the extended manufacturing process, lead time on rubber waterstop materials is quite lengthy, sometimes in the order of 6+ weeks. This can often have a detrimental impact on project schedules.

In addition, you may notice from a Greenstreak waterstop catalog that the prominent PVC waterstop profiles offered are of ribbed and ribbed/centerbulb geometries. These profiles have proven to be more versatile in performance than dumbbell and dumbbell/centerbulb geometries (which are the only options offered for SBR and Neoprene rubber waterstop) for a multitude of reasons. The advantages of ribbed profiles can be explained in much further depth by a Greenstreak Group engineer.

Rubber waterstop selected for chemical resistance reasons can usually be replaced by the more suitable TPE-R waterstop material, specifically designed for such instances (see our Westec brand catalog…www.chemstop.com). One common argument for the use of rubber waterstop versus PVC is that most rubber waterstop materials possess slightly higher physical properties than flexible PVC. Although this is generally true, the glued rubber waterstop unions and intersections yield a lower strength than heat-welded PVC waterstop connections, therefore becoming the "weak link" in the rubber waterstop circuit. These are often locations where waterstop performance is most critical.

Therefore, I encourage you to contact a Greenstreak Group engineer to determine whether rubber waterstop is really the best available waterstop material for the application in question. It has been found that most rubber waterstop specifications are simply out-dated or intended for applications where a significantly lower cost PVC waterstop is perfectly acceptable.

Sincerely,

Kyle Loyd, P.E.
Technical Sales Engineer